

Preface

I remember talking to a very close friend after I found out I would be writing this textbook. I had just finished writing my second bestselling and award-winning novel when this conversation occurred. I'll never forget his response.

He said, "So now you want to write books everyone will buy, but no one actually reads?"

That statement has been on my mind as I have written every page of this text. I don't want this book to be one you don't want to read. I also don't want this book to leave you unprepared for your future paralegal career.

Instead, I want this book to capture your mind and engage you with the best concepts an introduction to law textbook can provide. To that end, I have tried to create a different kind of textbook.

Rather than me preaching to you from some eye in the sky and filling your brains with useless historical facts no one will remember a week later, I want you to have conversations with me (and your professor) within each chapter. The law is all around you. It impacts you every day. There is no reason your opinion on legal issues cannot be front and center as you learn new concepts at the same time. There is no reason a textbook can't give you *real* stories from the field, provide you with only *relevant* information and questions you may need in your career, or present the information in a *relatable* way.

To promote these goals and our shared journey together, I have created the following sections within each chapter:

- **Keeping It Real.** In these sections, there are excerpts from cases I have selected that best illustrate the lessons in the chapter. Most of the time, I have summarized them for you to get you right to the critical information. Occasionally, you will have a longer excerpt.

In some textbooks, the cases may seem to just be filler that you often skip over. Do not do that here. I do not just throw the selected cases in. Often, you will find Make It Relevant questions throughout the cases to continue your walk with me and appreciate why I selected the cases I did. Many of the cases are from current events. You will find recent cases like the Depp/Heard case, the Paltrow skiing case, and many other very recent cases to bring old concepts into our world today.

- **Make It Relevant.** Imagine being in the middle of a very important conversation when you run to the bathroom. When you come back, you realize you missed important parts of what was being said while you were gone. Skipping Make It Relevant questions will have a similar result. These questions are designed for you to apply, analyze, and evaluate important concepts within each chapter. These are not just busy work.
- **Relatable Morsels.** These sections provide you with a variety of quotes and information from outside sources to give you perspective on concepts in the chapter. They will help you understand the topics that are being discussed. Some of these quotes are from legal experts, some are historical, and some are from everyday people.
- **Sticky Wicket.** This section puts you right in the middle of ethical issues that relate to each chapter through the use of fact patterns and hypotheticals. Many of these are based on real cases or experiences in practice.
- **GREAT Paralegal Tip.** Throughout each chapter, I will be giving you GREAT Paralegal Tip(s) that are designed to turn you into great practicing paralegals. These tips come from my experience leading paralegals as a practicing attorney and teaching paralegals strategies to be great.

Being a paralegal is being part of a profession, not just a job. Professions hire *professionals*. While I can't force you to read each chapter, I have done my part to create for you a different kind of textbook that I hope you want to read. Through *real*, *relevant*, and *relatable* information and examples, this text begins your journey toward becoming a paralegal professional.

I believe you can be the one paralegal who can be a light to a client on their darkest day. Put in the time now so you will be able to help clients in their weakest moments in the future. Choose to master your craft rather than look at this text as something you have to do to get a grade. The time you commit over these next weeks to becoming a great paralegal will be worth the hours, late nights, and effort.

I'm rooting for you. Let's begin our conversation.

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