

## DEPARTMENT: LAW AND PARALEGAL STUDIES

As a member of the **Department of Law and Paralegal Studies** you will join a group of students who are part of the **School of Professional Studies** at New York City College of Technology, City University of New York.

**Mission:** Law and Paralegal Studies is the study of substantive and procedural law topics, and the development of skills and abilities, required to participate competently in a legal work environment. The mission is to prepare students to be responsible, valuable participants in various legal work settings, as paralegals or in other positions. A paralegal, also known as a legal assistant, is an individual qualified through study, training and/or experience to assist attorneys with all forms of legal work. Paralegals perform a wide variety of specialized tasks in a broad range of legal fields. They do not practice law; rather, they work under the supervision of licensed attorneys who remain responsible to clients and the judicial system.

The Department offers two degrees. The **Associate in Applied Science (AAS)** degree program requires the following courses (among others): Introduction to Paralegal Studies; Civil Litigation and Procedure; Legal Research I and II; Real Estate; Estates, Trusts and Wills; Family Law; Legal Document Preparation; Legal Ethics; and a law elective. It also requires completion of an internship course, to provide each student the opportunity to combine classroom study with practical on-the-job experience.

The **Bachelor of Science (BS) degree in Paralegal Studies** is the first of its kind at any public college in New York State, and the only one in CUNY. It requires successful completion of the Associate's degree program, plus a series of courses in more specialized areas of law, and more sophisticated communication and technological skills. Course offerings include Employment and Labor Law; Bankruptcy; Immigration; Forensic Science; Legal Technology; Trial Preparation; Advanced Legal Research; an additional internship course; and several others.

Courses are offered online and in-person, days, evenings and weekends, and select courses are available in the summer. For each of these degrees, students must also complete courses in the CUNY-wide General Education curriculum known as Pathways, which provides a solid liberal arts background.

**Students in Law and Paralegal Studies** are provided with numerous resources to help with the legal knowledge and skills required for law-related employment: an

in-house law library; an exclusive computer lab equipped with legal-applicable and legal-specific software including electronic legal research systems; and free tutoring in all courses.

**Students can join** the Law and Paralegal Studies Club which sponsors a variety of activities throughout the academic year, designed to broaden their own, as well as the college community's, appreciation and understanding of our legal system and the opportunities it offers. These activities include:

- ✓ trips to the state's and nation's capitals to witness proceedings of the highest courts and meet the judges;
- ✓ study groups to help students prepare to become Notary Publics; and
- ✓ panel discussions featuring practitioners from various fields of the law, including alumni of our program.

**Faculty** includes seven full-time and approximately twelve part-time and adjunct faculty, all of whom are licensed attorneys.

### **Options for Employment and Further Study**

Although the Law and Paralegal Studies program focuses on paralegals, the knowledge and skills it offers prepare students for successful careers in a variety of professional and academic legal fields. Possibilities include law enforcement, legal technology, court administration and services, attending law or other graduate schools, and countless others.

Examples of employers for whom our graduates have worked include the Legal Aid Society, the U.S. Attorney General's Office, the U.S. Department of Labor, the Federal Trade Commission, the New York State Workers' Compensation Board, the New York Attorney General's Office, the New York City Law Department, the New York City Department of Education, the New York City Transit Authority, various New York City District Attorney's Offices, various judicial offices, JPMorgan Chase, and a variety of private law firms.

Our graduates have also gone on to law school, including CUNY and Cardozo in NYC, and Georgetown in Washington D.C., and to Master's degree programs, such as John Jay College of Criminal Justice, Baruch College, and American University.

### **Fun Facts**

- ✓ The degree programs are approved by the American Bar Association (ABA).



NEW YORK CITY COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

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## Who We Are



- ✓ The Department has about 300 students.
  
- ✓ "The law, after all, affects virtually every aspect of our personal, professional, and communal lives. Familiarity with our system of government, its laws, and the judicial system that interprets those laws is key to better understanding our world, appreciating why certain things happen, and deciding how to change or improve circumstances we don't like."<sup>1</sup>
- *Judith Smith Kaye, first woman Chief Judge of the New York Court of Appeals (died 2016)*

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<sup>1</sup> Judith Smith Kaye, *In Her Own Words: Reflections on Life and the Law, with Selected Judicial Opinions and Articles* 6 (2019).