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August 26 is “Paralegal Day” in New Mexico

Santa Fe, NM, Aug. 26, 2008 – Governor Bill Richardson has proclaimed August 26 in New Mexico “Paralegal Day.” In a written proclamation inked from his Executive Office earlier this March, Richardson praised the work of the profession and underscored its value to New Mexicans. “Paralegals provide a vital link between lawyers and the clients they represent,” reads the proclamation. “...Due to the rapidly evolving nature of our legal system, the responsibilities of New Mexico’s paralegals are constantly growing and expanding.”

The proclamation is warmly welcomed by Santa Fe Community College’s paralegal studies program, which recently expanded its program by offering classes in downtown Santa Fe. The program also offers a variety of classroom, blended-online and fully online courses. The Community College offers both an associate’s degree in paralegal studies and a paralegal certificate.

Paralegals are legal assistants who work under the direct supervision of lawyers. Throughout the county, the profession is growing in demand. Employment in paralegal and legal assistant fields is expected to grow by 22 percent between 2006 and 2016, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Many of these jobs have the potential to flourish in New Mexico, said Patricia Finn, professor of SFCC’s program. “Richardson’s nod to the paralegal community is important because there’s a tremendous need for trained paralegals in Northern New Mexico. SFCC is filling that community need,” she said. “SFCC is also supporting and working with local judiciary and the local legal community to make our program the best it can be.”

About Santa Fe Community College

Santa Fe Community College is the gateway to success for individuals and the community by providing affordable, high quality educational programs that serve the social, cultural, technological and economic needs of a diverse community. The college serves more than 14,500 students per year in its credit, noncredit and adult basic education programs. For further information, visit www.sfcnm.edu or call (505) 428-1000.

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