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I have chosen to become a paralegal because “You can’t look for an elephant in a cigar box.” That line, from the TV show, “Judd for the Defense,” resonated with me as a child and the ideals it embodies have molded my life. While similar concepts are derided by some as “technicalities,” I cherish them as constitutionally protected rights.

Additional images and issues from my upbringing sculpted my convictions. As my father struggled and multitudes perished in Vietnam that others might know freedom abroad, so too Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy struggled and died that others might know freedom and justice at home.

As a champion debater in high school, I learned that credible sources, careful preparation, and dynamic presentation are crucial to success – and every issue has myriad sides. That “justice” is different in our legal system for those who are represented by counsel versus those who are not was brought home forcefully to me as a prosecuting witness in numerous shoplifting cases while a retail store manager. My passion for fairness and the rule of law became personal when dealing with school systems to ensure the civil rights of my special needs son. This same passion led me to join the NAACP in Wilmington and volunteer at a community center when I moved to the Triangle.

With **passion** the **catalyst**; **hard skills**, including work ethic, academic achievement, and computer competence the **vehicle**, and **soft skills** of interpersonal relating the **steering wheel**, I am relentless and creative in seeking excellence in all I undertake. In applying these qualities to the paralegal profession, I anticipate it will open for me new doors of professional challenge, advancement potential, public service, and personal financial stability. I am eager to begin my paralegal career, merging my skills, passion, and newly acquired education to assist attorneys in advocating for hope, opportunity, justice and perhaps even freedom.