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April 29, 2025

Council of the Academy of Professional Reporters (CAPR)

If you're a court reporter, you've been there. You're in a heated depo, and the noon hour has come and gone without a lunch break. Or you're in trial, and counsel asks the judge if they can go past 5 to finish a witness's testimony. Who's the last person anyone thinks of? Right. The court reporter.

On March 28-30, 2025, Pennsylvania Court Reporters Association held its annual convention at The Sweetest Place on Earth – Hershey, PA. How ironic that one of our seminar topics was The Snack Attack. Even more ironic is that a seminar about healthy snacking in Chocolatetown was denied CEUs.

Our seminar presenter, Shanna Shultz, RD, LDN, is a Registered Dietitian (RD) and Licensed Dietitian Nutritionist (LDN) and completed her Bachelor of Science in Human Nutrition, Foods, & Exercise from Virginia Tech. Shanna has been in the nutrition field for 15 years, with experience in clinical, community, and food retail settings. In her current role at GIANT, she strives to help customers reach their wellbeing goals through education and food inspiration.

PCRA posits that learning whether or not to snack, when to snack, and how to combine foods for a balanced snack are "Valid Educational Learning Objectives" as described in Article II, Section 2.01, Article II, Section 2.02, requires a "Primary Target Audience," with content designed to "primarily meet the continuing education needs of specific NCRA credential holder segment or segments."

The Snack Attack was specifically designed "to meet the continuing education needs" of the officials, freelancers, and captioners who often find themselves at the mercy of others' schedules when it comes to nourishment and hydration. How often do court reporters find themselves working through lunch or past 5 to accommodate the needs of others? Learning how to pack high-quality, portable snacks to fuel those marathon sessions is what The Snack Attack is all about.

Article II, Section 2.03, "Relation to Professional Competence," states that the "learning objectives of the activity must be closely related to improving or maintaining the professional competence of one or more of the target audiences" found in Section 2.02.

One of the best ways to assure one's professional competence in the nitty-gritty, day-to-day grind of being a court reporter is by properly fueling and hydrating our bodies. In The Snack Attack, we learned that pairing carbohydrates or veggies with proteins or healthy fats will provide the energy we need to maintain our "professional competence" as we work through the lunch hour and past the end of a typical day.

That donut or those chocolates that you grab and eat as you rush back to court taste great in the moment, but the sugar high they bring leads to a sugar crash that leaves one craving more and more of those empty calories. Ms. Shultz illustrated particular food pairings that can be just as satisfying as that empty-calorie, grab-and-run donut but that provide the nutritional boost our bodies and brains need to continue the workday.

Article II, Section 2.04 requires that presenters be “Capable Instructor(s).” Section 2.05 requires the presenter to be from a “Qualified Responsible Sponsor.”

By holding a Bachelor of Science in Human Nutrition, Foods, & Exercise and being professionally credentialed as a Registered Dietitian (RD) and Licensed Dietitian Nutritionist (LDN), the presenter, Shanna Shultz, meets these criteria.

Article II, Section 2.06 requires that the seminar “must be at least 55 minutes in duration,” which *The Snack Attack* met.

Lastly, Article III, Section 3.10(c) “work/life balance” and Section 3.10(f), “professional mental health and stress management” are specifically enumerated as “Topics Eligible for CEUs,” and PCRA argues that *The Snack Attack* directly addresses these two criteria.

We had 31 registered professionals attend *The Snack Attack* seminar despite there being no CEUs awarded for the learning experience. PCRA has received multiple inquiries about why such a relevant topic – healthy snacking to keep you at your peak performance throughout the day – was denied CEUs by NCRA. Clearly, attendees of *The Snack Attack* found value in the presentation.

Based on the above analysis, PCRA believes *The Snack Attack* provides a valid educational learning experience. PCRA appeals NCRA’s decision to deny awarding CEUs for this seminar.

PCRA submits this letter in appeal of NCRA’s decision to deny awarding CEUs for *The Snack Attack* seminar.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Megan Burlew".

Megan Burlew
President
Pennsylvania Court Reporters Association