Health and Wellness: When Lawyers Need Help, They Shouldn’t Fear Getting It

By: Florida Supreme Court Chief Justice Jorge Labarga

Most lawyers work in stressful jobs. Mine often is. So are the jobs of most of my friends in the profession.

It is no surprise, then, that stress-related disease hits attorneys at a much higher rate than other people. It is a normal hazard of the job. We take on other people’s problems, so their stress becomes our stress. It is wholly predictable.

Yet for decades now we have treated the effect of stress as though it were something unusual and shameful. The results too often have been disastrous.

That is why Florida’s legal profession has decided it no longer can continue treating stress-related medical care as something to be discussed in whispers.

Attitudes need to change. Lawyers must be realistic about themselves and their jobs. They must be encouraged to get medical care without hiding the problem until it gets out of hand.

What lawyers face is not very different from repeated physical injuries. There was a time, for instance, when sports injuries were treated much the same way lawyers have treated their own job stress.

Athletes were expected to suffer in silence “for the good of the sport.” The predictable result was that minor injuries accumulated into major threats that ruined lives, ended careers, and damaged families.

Lawyers have made this same mistake with their job stress. We have looked the other way until the strain kills or maims.

Stress without proper care contributes to the higher-than-usual rates of addiction, suicide, and mental illness we see among lawyers. This problem was outlined in a March 4 Palm Beach Post article on this subject and in surveys cited there.

See “Chair’s Report,” next page
This is not a question of shame. It is a question of health.

We have seen too many high-profile tragedies. In recent years, our profession has watched highly respected litigators suddenly commit suicide without once telling their closest friends about their troubles.

We have seen skilled lawyers at the height of their talent suddenly collapse under the strain of their careers. And we have watched some of our best talent succumb to alcoholism and addiction because individuals felt unable to get help at an earlier point.

We also are seeing far too many lawyers who suffer in silence or who falter in their careers because they think they will be punished for getting the care they need. Imagine how we would react if the same were true of lawyers with a treatable condition like diabetes.

Lawyers who are afraid to get help will not get help. They will suffer alone until their health gives way, causing problems that could have been avoided for their clients and themselves.

No more. The entire profession shares this problem and must find solutions. The attitudes of the past that allowed this problem to continue must change.

The Florida Bar recently has begun a push to destigmatize addiction and mental-health treatment among its members. I applaud this move.

For four years as Chief Justice of the Florida Supreme Court, I have seen too many instances of attorneys who have fallen into professional ruin simply because they were afraid to get care.

We certainly will continue to protect the public and the clients of our state’s lawyers. No one is suggesting otherwise.

But we also must create a professional environment that encourages lawyers to recognize the effects of stress before they can grow into something catastrophic and irreversible.

The time has come for change. The Florida Supreme Court is fully behind the Bar’s effort to address the problem.

JORGE LABARGA, TALLAHASSEE

Chief Justice Jorge Labarga wrote this article for The Palm Beach Post, and it is reprinted with express permission.
WHERE DO ATTORNEYS TURN FOR HELP?

By: Molly Paris

In the spring of 2009, I made my first call to Florida Lawyers Assistance (FLA) while in my counselor’s office in a drug and alcohol treatment center. I had been struggling with drinking in the preceding years and made the decision to seek help. Michael Cohen answered the phone. I had been a practicing attorney in Illinois for seven years and moved to Florida where I hoped to continue to practice law. However, I was terrified that, because of my history of alcohol use and the fact that I had been in treatment, I would not be able to get admitted to The Florida Bar, and that I would not be able to continue working in the profession that I loved so much. Mr. Cohen shared his own story with me and then said, “Stay sober, be rigorously honest with The Bar, and I can help you.” I proceeded to work with FLA on a voluntary basis and was then offered a three-year conditional admission from The Bar. I have gone on to have a wonderful legal career here in Florida and continued to be involved as a volunteer with FLA throughout the years. In fact, when a position became available for a full-time Outreach Coordinator, I applied and was fortunate enough to get the position, which I began in September 2017. I have since been promoted to Assistant Director.

FLA is a non-profit corporation formed in 1986 in response to the Florida Supreme Court’s mandate that a program be created to identify and offer assistance to attorneys, law students and judges who are affected by substance abuse, mental health, or other disorders which negatively affect their lives and careers. FLA is independent of The Florida Bar although it does receive funding from that organization. Confidentiality is paramount to FLA. In voluntary cases, confidentiality is protected by the Florida Bar Rules so that judges, attorneys and law students who seek the assistance of FLA need not worry that they will be reported to the Florida Board of Bar Examiners, The Florida Bar, their employer or any other entity. FLA’s primary purpose is to assist the attorney, law student, or judge in their recovery and to decrease the stigma around seeking help. It is the responsibility of the legal community to help our colleagues who may not recognize their own need for assistance.

In cases where it is needed, FLA also has the ability to monitor students who are seeking admission to The Florida Bar, attorneys who have been admitted conditionally, attorneys who have been placed on diversion or probation through The Bar’s disciplinary system or attorneys who are monitored by their employer. Monitoring generally consists of the student or attorney entering into a contract, the terms of which vary depending upon whether the person is a mental health, substance abuse or co-occurring client.

FLA’s main office is located in Pompano Beach, Florida, and provides assistance to the entire state of Florida. In order to fulfill its state-wide mission, FLA has over 300 volunteer legal professionals who have promoted over 25 weekly support groups throughout Florida. These groups focus on substance abuse issues and are attended by law students, attorneys, and judges interested in the recovery process. The groups are completely confidential, and no record of attendance or issues raised are reported to FLA or to The Bar (unless required by terms of conditional admission or probation).

For those legal professionals affected by mental health issues such as stress, anxiety, depression, bi-polar disorder, dual diagnoses, or other compulsive disorders, FLA also offers facilitated group meetings. The groups are held weekly in six locations around the state and are facilitated by licensed mental health providers. FLA’s clinical director, Scott Weinstein, PhD, (and his canine co-therapist Maia) conducts three of these groups each week in Broward County and oversees the other groups which are held in Miami, Orlando, Tampa, Vero Beach, Jacksonville, and Gainesville.

Since the heartbreaking loss of Michael Cohen, our former Assistant Director, Judith Rushlow was hired as Executive Director. I currently split my time between outreach activity and assistant director duties. One of my main priorities is to visit all of Florida’s law schools. The ABA/Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation report showed that the highest rate of addiction and mental health issues was found in attorneys during their first 10 years of practice. For many, these issues began to come to the surface in law school. I have conducted presentations and CLEs at law firms, governmental organizations, and local bar associations. The ultimate goal is to spread the word that FLA is here, and ready to help. One of FLA’s goals is prevention. FLA hopes to reach individuals before issues turn into crises that may result in legal consequences, Bar disciplinary action, or worse.

I am one of the fortunate attorneys who knew where to turn for help. With nearly 10 years of successful recovery behind me I can certainly say that FLA has enhanced my recovery and my life in invaluable ways, and I will always be grateful that Michael Cohen was on the other end of the phone that day in 2009 in my counselor’s office.

Molly Paris joined the staff of Florida Lawyers Assistance in September 2017. Ms. Paris graduated from Loyola University Chicago School of Law in 2001. She is a member of both the Illinois and Florida Bars and is admitted to the U.S. District Courts for the Northern District of Illinois and the Northern, Middle, and Southern Districts of Florida. She has worked as a civil rights litigation attorney at the Protection and Advocacy agencies in Illinois and Florida, representing individuals with disabilities in matters related to employment discrimination, community integration, special education and abuse and neglect in institutions. Ms. Paris is a former participant of Florida Lawyers Assistance and has first-hand knowledge of being an attorney in recovery.
MEET OUR [LAW] SUITS
By: Hillary Thornton

Adriannette Williams is the new Assistant Director of the Henry Latimer Center for Professionalism at The Florida Bar.

Ms. Williams came from a civil litigation background. In 2016, while in law school at Western Michigan University Thomas M. Cooley Law School, Ms. Williams earned an externship in Atlanta, Georgia, at The Hatchett Firm that specializes in catastrophic injury and deaths. There, her supervisor was Glenda Hatchett, founding partner and the star of the former court show, “Judge Hatchett,” and current day “The Verdict with Judge Hatchett.”

When asked about her favorite part about working at The Florida Bar, Ms. Williams immediately responded that it is the people she has met. She says she feels fortunate to have met so many people that have made her feel welcome since she came on board. She also says that she appreciates the opportunity for professional development and collaboration with other departments. Ms. Williams emphasizes that the integrity of her department is a real strength at The Florida Bar, as it provides the chance to serve others while working toward a common goal.

Laughing, Ms. Williams notes that she does not have a typical day. In her short time here, she has presented twice on professionalism-related topics to members of The Florida Bar. Regularly, she coordinates with members of the various committees overseen by the Center to ensure that they have the resources and information necessary to fulfill their charges. She also collaborates with the Center’s Director, Rebecca Bandy, on assignments and tasks as needed and assists with the Center’s triannual newsletter, The Professional.

Ms. Williams’ best piece of advice is to “go above and beyond in whatever you do.” She says that practicing professionalism in the office should be accompanied by a desire to do what needs to be done, with pride. Ms. Williams also emphasizes the importance of respecting those around you, stating that people should “give the janitor the same amount of respect that you give the CEO.” She feels that it is important to remember in trying times the monumental efforts necessary to achieve a license, and this should be used to deter rash action that can jeopardize this achievement. This is important to remember, especially in difficult situations, because “it’s hard to get a Bar license and easy to lose it,” Ms. Williams says.

Ms. Williams is a woman of many talents. She learned to fly an airplane before she could drive a car when she attended a flight camp as a freshman in high school. This camp was established in memory of American fighter pilot Daniel “Chappie” James, who was also from Pensacola, Florida. The experience gave her the opportunity to learn the intricacies of aircrafts and flight, and she even got to go into the air traffic control tower! Ms. Williams is also an avid foodie, which she attributes to her grandfather who worked as a chef for 49 years. Finally, Ms. Williams likes to dance, stating her favorite genre is urban ballroom line dancing and her favorite dance is the Biker Shuffle.

Welcome to the Center for Professionalism and The Florida Bar, Ms. Williams!
START THEM EARLY: ENCOURAGING E-PROFESSIONALISM IN NEW BAR MEMBERS

By: Ashley Krenelka Chase

Millennials. Digital Natives. Tech-savvy young lawyers. How often do we hear these descriptions for new Florida Bar members? We do a disservice to the next generation of attorneys when we assume they are both technologically savvy and aware of what it means to be technologically professional.

But when I introduce my students to The Florida Bar Best Practices for Effective Electronic Communication, it is typically the first time they have thought about “e-professionalism.”1 Many are shocked when I inform them it is inappropriate to begin an email with “Hey Professor X” or fail to use a signature block. Others are flabbergasted when I tell them that they will be expected to keep an electronic calendar, for both their personal and professional lives, so that colleagues in law school and beyond will know their availability and can schedule meetings on a moment’s notice. Most are dumb-founded when I tell them that, as digital natives, they may be expected to walk into a firm and understand exactly how to use the firm’s technology and, perhaps, even select new software that will best serve their employer.

For us as mentors of the next generation of attorneys, it is important to remember that most young lawyers are not knowledgeable enough to be tech-ready on the firm’s software or put in charge of technology at the firm. Moreover, they typically lack the experience to know the boundaries of good e-professionalism.

As mentors, it is our job to train new lawyers on the technologies we use and coach e-professionalism. Although professionalism is demanded in everything from emails and social media, to time-keeping and billing, we cannot expect young lawyers to inherently understand that. Here are five ways we can help the next generation become professional users of legal and social technology.

1. Get to know your new attorneys’ online personas. When you hire new attorneys, get to know their online personas and understand the reasons for them. It could be that Sally has a very good reason to maintain that satirical sports profile that you think reflects poorly upon your firm. There may be a reason Dwayne posts 17 photos of his daughter before you have your morning coffee. Millennials, especially, like to connect with people and build relationships online, and while you may not agree with their methods, there may be a method to what you perceive as madness. Try to understand why they use the internet the way they do — whether professionally or not — and then coach them on the boundaries of what is professional in those contexts.

2. Develop guidelines and encourage individuality. New attorneys must behave professionally, but they also want to be individuals. Millennials love a good side hustle (we have watched professional blogging become a legitimate career, and some think that is truly the #bestifenever), and it could be that the way they use the internet relates to their larger, long-term goals. Remind new attorneys that nothing is truly private; they are always representing the firm and The Bar. Develop written guidelines for any content you feel is truly off limits for your lawyers’ social media, emails, and texts (e.g., profanity, nudity, information about the firm), and communicate your expectations regarding client confidentiality, privacy, or anonymity on social media platforms. Keep in mind, though, that clients may connect with an attorney over a shared love of falafel or a passion for badminton discovered online, which can help you develop new business. Developing guidelines for e-professionalism while encouraging individuality and relationship-building may bring business and energy to the firm in new and unexpected ways.

3. Encourage exploration of the latest technology, but do not expect it all to work. Silicon Valley has developed an entire culture based on a “fail faster” model of innovation and, chances are, young professionals are going to spend some time with new technologies that never take off. If an associate says she found a pen that tells her how to cite cases as she writes, let her try it out! Chances are the technology will not stick, but she may learn something about how to improve efficiencies or use existing technology in new ways.

4. Do not expect them to know everything about technology. Time and time again, students say, “Professor Chase, my boss wants me to recommend software to the firm, but I have never even used the firm’s current software, let alone tested anything new.” If you insist on relying on a Millennial attorney to choose firm software, be clear about the firm’s needs and restrictions, and then continued...
allow some time for the new lawyer to research software and learn more about it. Remember, most new lawyers, even digital natives, do not have the tools to evaluate legal software in a meaningful way.

5. **Make professionalism a part of the conversation; model good behavior.** Many of us are guilty of decrying others’ less-than-professional online behavior and then turning to a colleague and saying, “Look at this email I sent Mr. X. I really gave him a piece of my mind!” To expect e-professionalism from new lawyers, you must model it yourself. Draft emails the way you expect associates to, speak about opposing counsel in a way that suggests respect, and keep your social media accounts professional. We cannot expect the next generation of lawyers to clean up their acts online if we are not willing to do so ourselves.

These suggestions may seem like common sense, and your firm may be implementing some of them already, but chances are there are partners or senior associates in your firm who could benefit from a refresher on e-professionalism themselves.

By speaking with young lawyers about e-professionalism from the beginning and having a plan for how you will address e-professionalism and technology in your firm, you will soon find yourself surrounded by thoughtful, professional, and technologically capable new attorneys who make our firms—and our world—a better place.

**Endnotes**


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**INTERESTED IN HOSTING A PROFESSIONALISM SEMINAR?**

The Henry Latimer Center for Professionalism offers presentations on a variety of topics, such as emotional intelligence, conflict resolution, mentoring, networking, personality profiles, mindfulness, and much, much more!

If you are interested in hosting a presentation, please contact the Center to discuss and schedule your program at:

(850) 561-5747 or email us at cfp@floridabar.org
**TORONTO LAWYER SERVES CLAIM WITH INSTAGRAM**

By: Alex Robinson

When Toronto lawyer Tara Vasdani could not track down a defendant she was looking to serve, she turned to Instagram.

Vasdani recently obtained an order in Ontario Superior Court to serve a statement of claim using the social media app, which allows users to share photos and videos.

She says the order is likely the first of its kind in the province, and by allowing the service of a claim through Instagram, it signals a shift in how lawyers interact with technology.

“[I]n order to avoid becoming obsolete, it is our duty to evolve with society — and one of the concrete and surefire ways society is evolving is through technology,” she says.

Vasdani, who is an associate at Mason Caplan Roti LLP, issued the claim, in which she represents an insurance company, at the end of August.

She first attempted to serve the defendant on Sept. 1, 2017, using a physical address, and her process servers were told the defendant had moved away. She then tried using email, with a read receipt, but her messages were either ignored or never read.

Vasdani then looked up the defendant on LinkedIn and contacted her last listed employer, who told her the person never worked there.

When Vasdani could not find the defendant on other social media sites, she turned to Instagram, which the lawyer says she uses much more than Facebook or other apps.

Having found the defendant on Instagram, Vasdani brought a motion in court asking if she could serve the defendant through Instagram and LinkedIn.

The court granted service effective five days after Vasdani sent the necessary documents to the defendant through Instagram and LinkedIn, as well as through mail to her last known address.

Vasdani served the defendant in a private message on Instagram. The court did not require a read receipt be obtained for the service to be effective.

The lawyer says the order is the latest example of how the use of technology is creeping into the legal profession, which has been criticized for being largely resistant to change.

Ontario Attorney General Yasir Naqvi has committed to digitizing and modernizing the courts.

The Ministry of the Attorney General recently made it possible to file civil claims online — a change Vasdani says would have been inconceivable to many lawyers a year ago.

“If we are able to shift the way that we use and apply the law and legal tools so that they are more consistent with the individuals we are seeking to hold legally accountable, we will be met with efficacy, client satisfaction and the prestige the profession since its inception has and deserves to continue to hold,” she says.

**Citation:**

This article was originally published on February 2nd, 2018 in the Legal Feeds section of *Canadian Lawyer Magazine*, a Thomson Reuters property. The author, Alex Robinson, is a staff writer for Law Times. He started working for Thomson Reuters in 2016 and his work has appeared in weekly and daily publications across North America. You can find the original publication [here](#).
CROSS-GENERATIONAL MENTORING: BRIDGING THE GENERATION GAP

By: Melissa Rambo

Take a look around the office, and you will likely notice something – people of all ages working side-by-side. As Baby Boomers delay retirement and Millennials settle into their careers, more generations are represented in the labor force than ever before.¹

This diverse environment is ripe with opportunities for professionals of all ages to learn from one another; however, the generation gap creates challenges. Members of each generation have varied experiences and values, and failure to reconcile those differences can cause misunderstandings. Addressing different perspectives in key areas – and working to find a solution that best serves the mentor and mentee – will help ensure a meaningful relationship.

Communication

Communication practices vary greatly among generations. Members of the Silent Generation often enjoy communicating through writing, while Baby Boomers hold in-person meetings.² Generation Xers and Millennials, on the other hand, tend to rely on technology. Generation Xers use email, while Millennials thrive when texting or instant messaging.³

To resolve these differences, discuss preferred methods of communications for both the mentor and mentee. It is helpful to compromise based on content; short exchanges may be appropriate for email or text, while longer, in-depth conversations might be better suited for a phone call or in-person meeting. Frequency of communication should also be discussed – setting these boundaries will help each participant maintain reasonable expectations.

Feedback

Feedback should vary depending on generation. The Silent Generation tends to believe that “no news is good news,” and Baby Boomers rely on external rewards, like promotions, as signs of good performance; both generations may look no further for improvement.⁴ Generation Xers, however, enjoy and often seek out feedback.⁵ Millennials also appreciate feedback, but may not be accustomed to being told they have room to improve⁶ – therefore, constructive criticism should be delivered gently to ensure it is well-received.

Career

Members of each generation typically have different expectations for their careers. The Silent and Baby Boom Generations tend to stay with organizations for long periods of time, enjoying the ability to master a particular position. Younger generations may value new opportunities and be more likely to seek out different positions throughout their careers. This is particularly true of Millennials, who are known to look for quick movement to the next career opportunity.

It is important for the mentor to consider the mentee’s values and goals for their career and to tailor advice accordingly. Both parties should keep an open mind about their generational differences. For example, while Millennials’ drive for advancement may be seen as an unearned expectation of promotion, it also demonstrates a hunger for new skills – a wonderful trait for a mentee. On the other hand, Millennials can benefit from the wealth of institutional knowledge that older generations enjoy.

Management

Even if the mentor acts as the mentee’s partner rather than supervisor, it is important to consider the best management style. Millennials tend to respond to a friendly, coaching approach, while Generation Xers appreciate an entrepreneurial leadership style.⁷ Baby Boomers welcome collaborative situations, and members of the Silent Generation are comfortable with a strict, command-and-control style leader.⁸ A Silent Generation mentor who takes

continued...
a strict approach and expects a Millennial mentee to accept suggestions without any explanation will likely have a difficult time establishing a connection. Subtly changing the way the mentor presents information can help strengthen the mentor-mentee relationship.

Work/Life Balance
As the cost of tuition and average amount of student debt increases, Millennials report higher stress levels than previous generations. Accordingly, they may seek their mentors’ advice about achieving work/life balance – a topic that could seem irrelevant to Baby Boomers, known as the “live to work” generation. However, mentees stand to benefit from older generations’ insights regarding stress management if both parties are willing to engage in a conversation.

Conclusion
The generation gap does not have to hinder communication or prevent strong mentoring relationships. When mentors and mentees take the time to respect generational differences, they will gain valuable insights from one another. Remembering and respecting the differences that accompany a generational gap can lead to healthy, productive, and invaluable mentoring relationships.

Mentoring
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Mentoring
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Melissa Rambo is a third-year student at Florida State University College of Law, where she serves as a Notes and Comments Editor of the Florida State University Law Review and is a member of the Professionalism Student Advisory Board. She is currently a law clerk at Radey Law Firm and was previously a law clerk for the Henry Latimer Center for Professionalism.

Endnotes
3 Id.
4 Id.
5 Id.
6 Id.
7 Id.
8 Id.
9 Casselman, supra note 1.
10 Thielfoldt and Scheef, supra note 2.

The Florida Bar’s Henry Latimer Center for Professionalism, in partnership with FIU, hosts a comprehensive Professionalism Library Guide offering Professionalism Standards as well as articles, videos, and newsletters.

http://libguides.law.fiu.edu/henrylatimerguide
Arbitration has devolved into “arbitragement” of late and has been criticized by scholars as costly, time-consuming, and subject to hardball advocacy. This trend is not surprising given that career litigators, having been trained in the techniques of scorched-earth discovery and constant motion practice, are hesitant stepping outside their comfort zone. This includes the increasing filing of dispositive motions with requested additional hearing time for rancorous argument by counsel. This is precisely what arbitration is supposed to avoid.

Avoiding increasing the costs of the arbitration proceeding and/or delaying its conclusion must be paramount. How sound is a motion and what is its likelihood of success? Are there issues of fact that would preclude ruling in favor of the motion? Will a motion, if granted, really reduce costs and expedite the arbitration, or will it lead to just the opposite result? In many cases, striking a few claims or defenses of several asserted would not serve to abbreviate the proceedings. Consideration of a motion not likely to succeed will waste time and money. The cost and dilatory impact of court-style motion practice, where the making of dispositive motions is the norm, is troublesome. As an arbitrator, I am not against streamlining a case – just be careful in considering the potential challenges to final awards that defeat the purpose of an efficient process with finality.

Lastly, interpersonal communications are essential to maintaining civility in arbitration practice. Arbitrators do not want to be copied on snarky email correspondence amounting to posturing or previewing what should be left for final hearing. Professionalism in arbitration will lead to a better experience for counsel and client alike, in an increasingly maligned form of alternative dispute resolution.

Lawrence H. Kolin is a qualified arbitrator and Federal and Supreme Court of Florida Certified Circuit-Civil and Appellate Mediator at Upchurch Watson White & Max in Orlando. He is a member of the National Academy of Distinguished Neutrals and served as a General Magistrate in the Ninth Judicial Circuit Court for Orange County. He was founding chair of the Orange County Bar Association’s Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Committee and is currently an executive council member of The Florida Bar ADR Section and chair of its standing Arbitration Committee. He authors the ABA Journal Blawg “Orlando Mediator” listed at: www.abajournal.com/blawg/Orlando_Mediator.

Endnotes
SCOP Chair, Kara Berard Rockenbach, with Florida Bar President, Michael Higer at Winter Meeting

Second Circuit Professionalism Panel Sidebar Series with Judge Ron Flury

Center for Professionalism Staff at FSU College of Law’s Diversity Week

Student Education and Admission to the Bar Committee (SEABC) Member, Ronald Kozlowski, and Rebecca Bandy, Director of the Henry Latimer Center for Professionalism, presenting at University of Florida’s Levin College of Law along with University of Florida Law alum, Michael Alvarez

Standing Committee on Professionalism (SCOP) Chair, Kara Berard Rockenbach (left); Vice Chair, Starling Hendriks (center); and Vice Chair, Whitney Untiedt (right) at Winter Meeting
2016-2017 Circuit Professionalism Report Summaries

First Circuit
The First Judicial Circuit Bench and Bar Professionalism Committee planned its annual CLE cruise with the Escambia-Santa Rosa Bar Association and First Circuit legal community, which took place November 9-13, 2017. Due to the feedback from its focus groups, the Committee formed a subcommittee to create a formal mentoring program within the First Circuit, which will be implemented in the upcoming year. The focus groups also led to the Committee’s decision to hold a land-based symposium every year rather than every other year. The Committee hosted a series of professionalism socials and lunches for attorneys and judges. The Committee also implemented a program where individual judges in the Circuit host lunches, for which local Bar members can sign up to discuss concerns and topics of interest in a smaller setting. A statement on professionalism and the Local Professionalism Panels was included in the First Circuit uniform case management orders.

Second Circuit
The Second Circuit Professionalism Panel hosted three lunches with local judges regarding professionalism concerns, entitled the Professionalism Sidebar Series. The Panel works in tandem with the Tallahassee Bar Association and other voluntary bar associations to provide information on professionalism to the legal community.

Third Circuit
The Third Judicial Circuit Professionalism Panel and Committee sponsored and hosted events alongside the Third Circuit Bar Association and the Young Lawyer’s Division to promote professionalism and encourage interaction between attorneys and judges. The Committee will continue to further its culture of informal mentorship in the coming year.

Fourth Circuit
The Fourth Circuit is home to the Jacksonville Bar Professionalism and Mentoring Committee. In the last year, the Committee hosted several training seminars, CLEs, and judicial receptions that focused on professionalism. The Committee has been planning a Professionalism/Technology Seminar at THE PLAYERS Championship for CLE credit, to be held on May 9, 2018, and a Youth Law Day, details TBD. The Committee also presented its Jacksonville Bar Association Professionalism Award to Mike Tanner at its Annual Professionalism Seminar. The Committee encourages members, especially new attorneys, to become part of the mentoring program it offers in conjunction with the Fourth Judicial Circuit, aiming to heighten civility, professionalism, and competence in the circuit. The Committee also voted to rename the Bench and Professionalism Committee to the Bench and Bar Professionalism and Mentoring Committee. The Jacksonville Bar Association has been selected as the recipient of the 2017 Voluntary Bar Association Pro Bono Service Award.

Fifth Circuit
The Honorable Thomas D. Sawaya of the Fifth District Court of Appeal was awarded the Fifth Circuit Professionalism Award. The Committee has been working towards its 2018 Professionalism Conference, which will fulfill both CLE and judicial diversity education requirements. The Committee also developed a program on LGBTQ persons in the court system. The Committee is sponsoring an essay contest for high school students focusing on professionalism and diversity. The Committee developed mentoring programs and supports the Circuit’s Inns of Court.

Sixth Circuit
The Sixth Judicial Circuit Professionalism Committee participated in various programs and seminars put on by local bar associations, including the St. Petersburg Bar Association and the Clearwater Bar Association’s 2016 Wild Wild West Bench & Bar-B-Que; the Clearwater Bar Association’s 2017 Professionalism Symposium; the Sixth Judicial Circuit Professionalism Committee’s 2017 Criminal Professionalism Seminar; and the St. Petersburg Bar Association’s Changes in Latitude – Changes in Attitude Professionalism Seminar and Wellness Fair. The Committee also began planning for their professionalism seminar that occurred on February 9, 2018. Additionally, the Committee participated in the St. Petersburg Bar Association Mentoring Program.

Seventh Circuit
The Seventh Circuit Professionalism Committee co-hosted its biennial Professionalism Symposium in May 2017 with all four local bar associations, the Volusia County Bar Association, the St. Johns County Bar Association, the Flagler County
The Ninth Judicial Circuit Professionalism Committee presented three professionalism awards at their Professionalism Awards Ceremony on March 10, 2017. The Committee awarded the James G. Glazebrook Memorial Bar Service Award to the Honorable Arthur B. Briskman; the William B. Trickel, Jr. Professionalism Award to Charles T. Wells; and the Lawrence G. Mathews, Jr. Young Lawyer Professionalism Award to Karen Persis. The Committee also hosted seminars on various topics, including a Civility Matters series, Professionalism in Negotiations, a social media series, and a professionalism presentation to students at Barry University Dwayne O. Andreas School of Law and Florida A&M University College of Law. Several local voluntary bar associations also hosted six Judicial Luncheons to encourage conversation with judges, magistrates, and hearing officers. The Local Professionalism Panels hears and closes approximately three to four complaints per year.

The Eighth Judicial Circuit Professionalism Committee hosted the Judicial Mentoring Program, which pairs new judges with experienced judges to help them transition from practicing law to serving on the bench. The Committee has used this program as a way to stress the importance of professionalism to new judges. The Committee also participated in various Inns of Court events, including the Amazeln® Race event, to enhance mentoring relationships through team activities and a presentation on the use of technology in the legal profession. The Eighth Judicial Circuit Bar Association hosted its annual Professionalism Seminar at the University of Florida Fredric G. Levin College of Law. The YLD attempted to focus more on family and wellness and additionally hosted six Judicial Luncheons to encourage conversation with judges, magistrates, and hearing officers. The Local Professionalism Panels hears and closes approximately three to four complaints per year.

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In 2016, the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Professionalism Committee created the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Professionalism Committee Excellence in Professionalism Award to honor an individual for his or her service on either the Professionalism Committee or the Local Professionalism Panels. The Committee also planned its Fifth Annual New Attorney Breakfast that was held on October 20, 2017. The Local Professionalism Panels have been in place and running smoothly within the Circuit. Additionally, members of the Committee are actively promoting professionalism and civility by participating in many projects in the circuit, including mentoring programs and panel discussions. The Committee plans to continue to work on its mentoring program and develop a series of lunch seminars. Finally, the Committee planned its Fifth Annual Professionalism and Civility Summit that was rescheduled for February 9, 2018. The event focused on the law schools and their role in promoting professionalism.

The Twelfth Circuit Local Professionalism Panel Committee is responsible for reviewing complaints filed in the circuit. Though the Twelfth Circuit does not have a professionalism committee, it carries out professionalism activities through local bar associations, including the Manatee County Bar Association (MCBA), the Sarasota County Bar Association (SCBA) and the SCBA’s South County Division. Each has engaged in a number of lunches, seminars, and meetings which actively promote ethics, civility, and professionalism efforts. On March 14, 2017, the Judge John M. Scheb American Inn of Court awarded its annual Professionalism Award to Attorney Kathi “Kate” Halvorsen. Finally, the MCBA Young Lawyers Division hosted its Second Annual Professionalism Roundtable on March 15, 2017. This event brought together experienced judges and practitioners with young lawyers to share their experiences about the practice of law and tenets of professionalism. The Roundtable event was followed by a one-hour CLE on mediation.

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Circuit Professionalism Report Summaries
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THIRTEENTH CIRCUIT

The Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Professionalism Committee is made up of five subcommittees. The Professionalism Awards Subcommittee awarded its Third Annual Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Professionalism Award to David Rowland at the Hillsborough County Bar Association’s Twentieth Annual Bench Bar Conference Membership Luncheon. The Promotions Subcommittee has distributed information regarding the Local Professionalism Panels, including how to make a professional complaint. The CLE & Events Subcommittee gave multiple presentations to educate the circuit on professionalism topics and issues. Committee Member Thomas Newcomb Hyde created a presentation promoting professionalism which has received ongoing CLE accreditation and has been presented at events throughout the state. The Local Professionalism Panel Subcommittee is receiving complaints and resolved 22 cases during the reporting period. The Medical/Legal Subcommittee has been involved with the Black Robe Program, an annual effort partnering judges, lawyers, doctors, medical students, and faculty from the schools of medicine and pharmacy; the event was held on October 25, 2016.

A group of judges with their western-themed booth at the Judicial Pig Roast

FOURTEENTH CIRCUIT

The Fourteenth Judicial Circuit Bench-Bar and Professionalism Committee sponsored its annual Professionalism Awards Ceremony on May 4, 2017, at which Justice C. Alan Lawson spoke. At the ceremony, the Committee awarded the Larry G. Smith Professionalism Award to Attorney Todd Brister. Planning for the 2018 professionalism awards ceremony began, holding that the event will occur on May 3, 2018, with Justice Ricky Polston as the keynote speaker. The Committee communicates primarily via email.

Co-chairs Larry Rochefort and Kara Berard Rockenbach present the annual Sidney A. Stubbs Professionalism Award to Michael Mopsick. John Whittles, PBCBA Bar President (2017), is on the right.

A group of judges with their western-themed booth at the Judicial Pig Roast

SIXTEENTH CIRCUIT

The Sixteenth Judicial Circuit Local Professionalism Committee has a joint membership with the Local Professionalism Panel, which welcomed a new chair and members during the reporting period. Members of the Committee both hosted and attended various functions to discuss procedural and ethical e-filing issues, including a reception for the judges of the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit and Third District Court of Appeal. The Committee is chaired by County Judge Ruth Becker of Monroe County, and includes membership of two additional county judges and six local attorneys appointed by the chief judge. Complaints are routed to the chair and quarterly meetings are scheduled to discuss complaints, with additional meetings held as necessary.

Ethics CLE presentation

The Palm Beach County Bar Professionalism Committee awarded the Sidney A. Stubbs Professionalism Award to Michael Mopsick. The Committee also planned events, such as a Professionalism Enhancement CLE Spring Seminar in conjunction with American Board of Trial Attorneys and an informal spring event titled Meet Your Mentors Because It Matters. Further, the Committee held meetings to plan methods for outreach to new attorneys, breakfast meetings, and the Local Professionalism Panel. The Local Professionalism Panel now publishes redacted closing recommendation letters for complaints they receive in the monthly Palm Beach County Bar Association bulletin for informational purposes.

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**SEVENTEENTH CIRCUIT**

The Broward County Bar Association Professionalism Committee collaborated with the Young Lawyers Section and other voluntary bar associations to host various professionalism-related events, such as Approaching the Bench (discussing courtroom decorum and professionalism); the Annual Diversity Luncheon; the Advocating for Change: The Young Lawyer’s Guide to Local Politics seminar (discussing how lawyers should behave and present themselves in the community); and the 2017 Got Civility? Seminar promoting civility in the legal profession. Committee members also participate in the Broward County Bar Association Mentorship Program.

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**TWENTIETH CIRCUIT**

The Twenty Judicial Circuit Professionalism Committee attended various seminars, events, and functions to promote professionalism in the Circuit. These included Circuit Mock Trial Competitions hosted by local bar associations; the Lee County Bar Association Pro Bono Awards Luncheon; Inn of Court presentations; and a judicial panel seminar from the Second District Court of Appeal regarding courtroom etiquette and other professionalism-related topics.

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Pictured left to right are Preethi Sekharan, recipient of the Second Annual Professionalism Award; The Honorable Steve Levin; Dr. Rama Sekharan; and Dr. N.C. Sekharan at the 2016 Martin County Bar Association Judicial Reception.

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**EIGHTEENTH CIRCUIT**

The Eighteenth Judicial Circuit Professionalism Committee participated in numerous professionalism events hosted by the Brevard County Bar Association, the Seminole County Bar Association, and various local Inns of Court. The Seminole County Bar Association awarded its Seminole Legal Aid Association Award to the Seminole County Legal Aid Veterans Team and the Whigham Gray Award to Jennifer Frank during its December awards ceremony. The Brevard County Bar Association awarded its Professionalism Award to Iraq War veteran and cancer survivor, Renee Dial.

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The Eighteenth Judicial Circuit Professionalism Committee participated in numerous professionalism events hosted by the Brevard County Bar Association, the Seminole County Bar Association, and various local Inns of Court. The Seminole County Bar Association awarded its Seminole Legal Aid Association Award to the Seminole County Legal Aid Veterans Team and the Whigham Gray Award to Jennifer Frank during its December awards ceremony. The Brevard County Bar Association awarded its Professionalism Award to Iraq War veteran and cancer survivor, Renee Dial.

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**NINETEENTH CIRCUIT**

The Nineteenth Circuit Professionalism Panel partnered with the local voluntary bar associations in hosting professionalism events, luncheons, and evening programs to benefit the attorneys of the circuit. Events included the annual Bench Bar Conference, which offered professionalism-centered CLEs and judge/attorney interaction regarding professionalism. The Martin County Bar Association awarded its Second Annual Professionalism Award to Preethi Sekharan at their judicial reception.
**Ave Maria School of Law**

Ave Maria School of Law begins teaching professionalism during new student orientation, where the president, dean, and associate dean for academic affairs all discuss its importance to the legal profession. Representatives from the Florida Board of Bar Examiners also give a presentation to help students understand the character and fitness process. After orientation, faculty members incorporate professionalism into their courses by including professionalism points in their syllabi as a factor by which students are evaluated. Students learn about professionalism from an attorney through the school’s mentor program, and experience professionalism in practice as a Certified Legal Intern in the externship program. Further, Ave Maria Law students learn about professionalism in practice through the 1L mentorship program that pairs 1Ls with practicing attorneys. Guest speakers invited by the law school throughout the year often focus on professionalism and ethics in their discussions. Additionally, Ave Maria Law holds an annual Honor Code Ceremony, where students promise to hold themselves to the highest standards of professional conduct. Finally, professionalism is one of the components used to determine the recipient of one of the school’s most prestigious awards, the Mary, Queen of Lawyers Award.

**Barry University Dwayne O. Andreas School of Law**

Barry University School of Law incorporates themes of professionalism throughout orientation, educating incoming students on the various aspects of professionalism, how professionalism affects their role as a law student, and how professionalism skills are essential as they become a licensed member of the legal profession. Students attend a lecture on both the Barry Law Honor Code and the Conduct Code; learn about professional responsibility through hypothetical problems; discuss punctuality, planning, and professionalism in a Stress and Time Management session; and take a professionalism oath. The school’s definition of professionalism can be found in Barry Law’s Student Handbook. Themes of professionalism are included in various courses, including Legal Research and Writing, Florida Civil Practice, Conflict of Laws, and Clinics and Externships. Barry Law students must also fulfill the six-credit Professionalism Enhancement requirement for graduation, which includes a minimum of one hour of a cultural competency-approved program or event, focused on the importance of building an inclusive community characterized by interdependence, dignity and equality, compassion and respect for self and others. Barry Law has also partnered with the Orange County Bar Association’s Professionalism Committee to participate in the Pizza and Professionalism series, including one event that focused on professionalism and social media use. Finally, in Fall 2016, Barry Law began the Professionalism Practice Interviews, a monthly event that brings alumni to campus to conduct practice interviews with students and provide professionalism tips.

**Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University College of Law**

Orientation for Florida A&M University (FAMU) College of Law students contains a half day of professionalism-related programming, including two panels of speakers brought in to discuss issues of professionalism in the legal community and impress upon the incoming students the importance of professionalism in the law. Incoming students also participate in small group discussions centered around vignettes that display unprofessional behavior, both in law school and in practice, and take an oath and sign a pledge of professionalism. FAMU students are required to complete at least six credits of courses designated as professional skills that integrate themes of professionalism. Finally, the Career Planning and Professional Development Office provide information and guidance on professionalism to the students.

**Florida Coastal School of Law**

All first-year students attend a professionalism session during new student orientation at Florida Coastal School of Law. The presentation centers on professionalism in the classroom, on campus, and in the community. Students also take a professionalism oath during their orientation. Further, all students are required to take a live clinic course or externship, through which professionalism is emphasized. In the classroom, professors at Florida Coastal School of Law aim to incorporate relevant aspects of professionalism in his or her course. Florida Coastal School of Law sponsors an annual Citizenship Day, a free legal event that includes a training course with cross-cultural and professionalism elements offered to every participant. Students can also learn professionalism in practice when they attend regular voluntary association luncheons and participate in local Inns of Court. This can also be learned through the various mentoring programs from the Offices of Student Affairs and Alumni Affairs. Students can also be awarded the Phyllis Stansell Ethics and Professionalism Award upon graduation for exemplifying professionalism and ethical behavior as a student. Finally, the Student Bar Association Committees include Corporate and Business Law Society and Phi Delta Phi, who specifically provide education on professional and ethical behavior.

**Florida International University College of Law**

Florida International University (FIU) Law students are exposed to the concepts of professionalism very early in orientation, including a professor panel on the responsibilities of a legal professional, a review of the Student Code of Conduct, and a guest speaker that addresses professionalism issues. Students also take a professionalism oath and first year pledge. FIU Law incorporates professionalism into many academic classes, clinics, and externships. Students are also exposed to themes of professionalism through various programs put on by the school, including a Civility Matters symposium and a Trial Advocacy continued...
program entitled Great Legal Storytellers. These are in addition to the events, workshops, and presentations put on by the Career Services, Legal Clinics, and Student Affairs offices. Finally, FIU Law pairs 1Ls with peer, faculty, and alumni mentors, as well as providing mentoring programs through various school organizations.

**Florida State University College of Law**

During orientation, incoming 1Ls at the Florida State University (FSU) College of Law are introduced to the themes of professionalism, civility, and ethics, and are provided the Creed of Professionalism. FSU Law finished its orientation with a community service project at America’s Second Harvest of the Big Bend food bank. The Career Services and Professional Development Center provides both a definition and examples of professional behavior. Many professors include the topic of professionalism in their courses, including classes like Legal Writing and Research, Supreme Court Roleplay, Negotiations, and Criminal Procedure-Adjudication. These concepts are also emphasized in the externship and clinic programs. Further, the Career Services and Professional Development Center offers a Professional Development Course created with a focus on advanced and specialized training on career-related topics for law students at all levels, with the issuance of a certificate upon completion. Each presentation contains themes of professionalism, ethics, and civility. During FSU Law’s annual Summer for Undergraduates Program, one of the sessions centered on the importance and pitfalls of social media, reputation and identity, networking, and cultural competencies. Another session featured a discussion on character and fitness as it relates to law school and bar admissions. FSU Law also hosts a Jurist-in-Residence Program that brings in various judges to meet with students and faculty to discuss professionalism issues and answer questions. The school also brings in the Florida Board of Bar Examiners to discuss professionalism as it relates to the bar admissions process and character and fitness. Various student organizations host events that incorporate and emphasize the importance of professionalism, including Women’s Law Symposium, the Black Law Students Association, the Cuban American Bar Association, Phi Alpha Delta, the Student Bar Association, and co-curricular teams Moot Court and Mock Trial. FSU Law also has a robust mentoring system, with the opportunity to be paired with a mentor coming from various organizations and FSU Law’s mentoring programs. FSU Law recently began the Raising the Bar Professionalism Program that includes Passing the Torch, a mentoring program that pairs graduating 3Ls with FSU Law alumni. Students at FSU Law are able to learn professionalism concepts through various Inns of Court, classes taught by sitting Florida Supreme Court Justices, and helping moot cases for the Solicitor General and Attorney General of Florida.

**Nova Southeastern University Shepard Broad College of Law**

Faculty and staff incorporate professionalism from the first day of orientation, where new students take the College of Law Student Oath of Professionalism. Further, the Office of Student Services designates one day of orientation as Professionalism Day, during which students attend a professionalism presentation, a group panel, and are invited to take part in various community service activities on the last day of orientation. The Shepard Broad College of Law Code of Academic Regulations includes a specific definition of professionalism, which is incorporated into the Student Professional Agreement that students are encouraged to sign by the Office of Career and Professional Development and the Pro Bono Honor Program Handbook. Nova Law strives to incorporate relevant aspects of professionalism in each course, including the required Legal Research and Writing I and II classes, and various workshops, clinics, and seminars on the topic. Additionally, Nova’s Office of Alumni Relations organizes Law Center Plus seminars that ask practicing attorneys to share the details of their everyday practice, including professionalism topics and examples. These seminars are offered through live web streaming and by video recording. The Office of Alumni Relations administers a Mentoring Program organized by practice area. Finally, the Dean’s Certificate of Professionalism is awarded to students who exemplify the professional character traits in the Three Pillars of Professionalism, which are Law School Service/Leadership, Law School and Legal Community Engagement, and Public Service.

**Stetson University College of Law**

Stetson students are led in reciting the oath of admission to The Florida Bar at the Professionalism Luncheon at orientation. Orientation sessions also emphasize cultural competence and pro bono work as part of professionalism. The law school further includes a definition of professionalism in its Code of Student Professionalism and Conduct and incorporates discussion of the Model Rules of Professional Conduct in its first-year Legal Writing and Research courses. Clinical and externship opportunities allow students to gain vital practical knowledge and see the importance of professionalism in practice. Beyond the classroom, Stetson promotes professionalism by hosting its annual William Reece Smith, Jr. Lecture that brings nationally-recognized speakers to speak on the topic of professional responsibility to judges, attorneys, and law students. The winner of the William Reece Smith, Jr. Distinguished Professorship Award plans and promotes programming centered on professionalism and public service. Finally, Stetson offers its students the opportunity to apply to the Leadership Development Committee, on which students participate in professional leadership programs and is accompanied by a certificate upon graduation.

**St. Thomas University School of Law**

St. Thomas University School of Law emphasizes professionalism from the very beginning of orientation through a presentation on the intersection of professionalism and social media and having students take the Oath of Professionalism. St. Thomas Law also hosts a Professionalism Day, a program with more detailed presentations by professors and the Florida Board of Bar Examiners. The law school also held an Orientation 2.0, with presentations by professors, deans, the Access Group, and Florida Lawyers’ Assistance Program. St. Thomas also defines the professionalism expectations in the preamble to their Honor Code. In the classroom, St. Thomas Law works to ensure that virtually every course touches on the professionalism aspects relevant to that substantive area. The law school also works with local organizations, such as the Peter T. Fay Inns of Court in Miami-Dad County, to instill professionalism. Students and faculty continued...
regularly participate in the Steven R. Booher Inns of Court in Broward County, Florida, where students work with professionals to complete exercises regarding proper ethical and civil behavior. In addition, St. Thomas hosts attorneys, judges, and other professionals as part of a lunch educational programs which focus on professionalism in career development. Professionalism is also discussed in meetings of student organizations, which often include legal practitioners as guest speakers.

**UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA LEVIN COLLEGE OF LAW**

During orientation, the University of Florida (UF) Fredric C. Levin College of Law seeks to demonstrate to students that their professional career begins as soon as they are law students, not graduates. The law school puts a high emphasis on professionalism, ensuring that all students understand its importance from the first day of orientation by requiring their participation in a program titled, Professionalism in the Law School Community and the Profession. At the conclusion of the orientation program, students take the Oath of Professionalism. First-year students are then required to take a course called Introduction to Lawyering, which acquaints them with the defining attributes of the legal profession, including a code of ethics and assumption of duties to clients, the justice system, and society as a whole. Taught through lectures, problem analysis, discussions, and participatory exercises, the Introduction to Lawyering course is designed to introduce the concept of professionalism and familiarize students with problem-solving techniques that can be used to address ethical issues lawyers will undoubtedly face. Annually, organizations at the law school host professionalism-related events, including an event at the federal courthouse in Miami with presentations and networking, a professionalism week, programs devoted to professionalism in the context of tax practice, and workshops and symposiums that promote inclusion in the profession. UF Law also offers a professional development fund, which reimburses students who attend conferences, bar events, job fairs, and CLE programs to reach their professional goals.

**UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI SCHOOL OF LAW**

Beginning at orientation, students at the University of Miami (UM) School of Law are exposed to themes of professionalism through review of the Honor Code, presentations on the importance of professionalism and candor, and a mentoring luncheon where incoming 1Ls and transfer students could discuss professionalism with local attorneys and judges. UM Law incorporates professionalism into the curriculum of various courses, clinics, and skills training opportunities. UM Law’s Center for Ethics and Public Service (CEPS) is an interdisciplinary program devoted to training students to the values of ethical judgment, professional responsibility, and public service in law and society. CEPS’s programs include the Historic Black Church Program, the Professional Responsibility & Ethics Program (PREP), the Environmental Justice Clinic, the Social Enterprise Clinic, and the Oral History and Documentary Film Project. Additionally, UM Law provides various programs in which students can learn and practice professionalism techniques. These include the Mindfulness in Law Program, which teaches techniques with which students can approach challenging situations both calmly and professionally; the Partnership for Professionalism Program, in which students meet with judges and attorneys to discuss prepared scenarios of civility, ethics, and professionalism; and the Helping Others Through Pro Bono Efforts (HOPE) Program, which serves as the Public Interest Resource Center of UM Law. Further, the Career Development Office sponsors programming for preparing for professional behavior, including presentations on proper interview techniques, appropriate use of business cards, and resume preparation. Finally, UM Law provides numerous mentoring programs through the Career Development Office, HOPE, the Litigation Skills Program, Partnership for Professionalism, Inns of Court, and student organizations.

**WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY THOMAS M. COOLEY LAW SCHOOL**

Western Michigan University Thomas M. Cooley (WMU-Cooley) Law School incorporates four components of professionalism in its new student orientation. The first is the Professionalism in Action program that brings attorneys to campus to discuss why ethics matter in law school and in practice. In the second, students are given guidance on professional behavior during a presentation titled Professionalism in Decorum, Attire, and Correspondence. Third, students are introduced to the Honor Code and Disciplinary Procedures. Finally, students then pledge their commitment to honor in an oath administered by a robed judge. In the classroom, WMU-Cooley Law has worked to incorporate substantive issues of ethics and professionalism into the course curriculum. Procedurally, students are required to attend class, be on time, and conduct themselves professionally. WMU-Cooley Law also teaches professionalism in seminars and programs, including the Integrity in Our Communities Speaker Series and a seminar titled, Bar Exam and Professionalism Discussion Panel. Additionally, the law school offers an Ethics and Professionalism Library which maintains over 3,000 titles. The Career and Professional Development hosts a variety of programs which allow students to further their professional development, and extracurricular activities such as mock trial and moot court competitions allow students to practice professionalism in a variety of settings. Finally, WMU-Cooley Law launched a Leaders Academy, during which participating students are involved in comprehensive leadership development under the guidance of an advanced-degree mentor.
Our Florida legal profession is self-governing. Our Bar membership is a privilege. To those of us with legal heroes, the giants of The Bar displayed the utmost civility at all times. The Bar’s continued call to civility and professionalism stands in stark contrast to the coarsened rantings in our social and political discourse. Seemingly, there is no premium on civility in our broader society. The simple truth is that attorneys must conduct themselves in a civil manner, and most do.

Sadly, as some lawyers increasingly see themselves as merchants of goods, and consumers view legal services as a fungible commodity, noble views of civility and professionalism can be pushed aside in the race to the bottom line.

Incivility adds nothing to the pursuit of justice or to the client’s interests. Instead, incivility increases costs and stress, makes complex issues more difficult to solve, and decreases motivation, performance, and creativity. Posturing, mean-spiritedness, and the denial of basic courtesies appear to be growing in the legal profession. Such tactics are rarely successful in the long run and are always expensive for the client. They also demean the profession. For some, bombastic behavior is a strategy. A 2007 Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Professionalism found that over 70 percent of attorneys have reported being a victim of strategic incivility. Opposing counsel have strategically employed uncivil behaviors in an attempt to gain the upper-hand in litigation. We should not tolerate deliberate misrepresentation of facts, not agreeing to reasonable requests for accommodation, indiscriminate or frivolous use of pleadings, and inflammatory writing in briefs or motions.

Civility (or lack thereof) has an impact on a lawyer’s reputation. A single uncivil act can haunt an attorney for years and damage or destroy any established reputation. Yet, a reputation for civility enhances a lawyer’s credibility with judges, court staff, and the greater legal community.

Civility does not require servile tolerance, unwarranted agreement, absence of criticism, or even liking a person; however, it does require respect for the other side. Rationality underpins the law. The effective lawyer tries to understand the other side’s argument and is open to persuasion yet attempts to convince the other side of the correctness of his or her position. Rationality seeks common ground, a space where we can resolve disputes with logic and good faith.

The term “good faith” is ingrained in the legal profession. Case law and statutes tell us that to be successful, our legal relationships require the exercise of good faith. Good faith should guide our compliance with the law. Too often, people make frivolous arguments devoid of fact or reason. Attacks on others’ character has never been tolerated in the practice of law. As lawyers, we are trained to study facts, search for the applicable legal principles, apply the law to the facts, and then attempt to persuade opposing counsel, jury, or judge. Reason displaces unbridled passion.

We are a nation of diverse and disparate views. We should not avoid honest debates on issues of legal, societal, and political concern. Disparate views need to be discussed for society to survive. But debate need not be mean-spirited. The legal profession has always been marked by the ability of adversaries to lay down their arms and remain cordial, if not friends.

Ours is a noble calling. We applaud those who remain loyal to a practice model that recognizes the dignity of others, does not let passion displace rationality, and allows for the polite and cordial exchange of views about how the law should develop and be applied. I hope that, again, lawyers will take the lead. This country needs civilized discussion. The practice of civility and professionalism within The Bar should offer a guide on which our broader society can model its behavior.

Chief Judge Edward C. LaRose received his undergraduate degree, summa cum laude, in 1977 from Boston College. He received his Juris Doctor degree, cum laude, from Cornell Law School in 1980. Governor Jeb Bush appointed Judge LaRose to the Second District Court of Appeal, and he began serving as a member of the court in February 2005.

Judge LaRose was board certified in Antitrust and Trade Regulation Law by The Florida Bar Board of Legal Specialization and Education from 2001-2016. He is certified as a circuit-civil mediator and served as an arbitrator for the American Arbitration Association and the National Association of Securities Dealers, has been AV rated by Martindale-Hubbell, and has been recognized in Chambers USA and Best Lawyers in America. He serves as an adjunct professor of law at the Stetson University College of Law.

Judge LaRose was born in Putnam, Connecticut, in 1955. He is married and has three children.
Mentorship at the Movies, the inaugural social event hosted by the Broward County Bar Association’s (BCBA) Mentorship Committee, was held March 1, 2018, at the classic Savor Cinema movie theater in Fort Lauderdale.

The event kicked off with movie and mentorship trivia, mingling, and opening remarks from Braulio Rosa, executive director of the BCBA. Mr. Rosa explained the evolution that the Mentorship Program had undergone over the past year, leading up to the event. This event was the fourth in a four-part series of the BCBA’s 2017-2018 Mentorship Program.

The evening centered around trying to prove to the packed crowd of about 100 lawyers and judges that mentorships really are amazing, with the hopes of reviving interest in participating in the Bar Association’s Mentorship Program, encouraging attendance at future events the Mentorship Committee will present, and in fostering the formation of mentorships. Kristin Bianculli, chair of the Mentorship Committee, introduced her two mentors, Dan Kaufman (attorney, and Ms. Bianculli’s law-school-professor-turned-colleague-and-friend) and her father, David Bianculli (writer and NPR “Fresh Air” television critic), who helped host the evening’s festivities.

The Mentrio Segment kicked off the night, with six groups of three judges and/or lawyers who either mentored or were guided by one another answered tongue-in-cheek multiple-choice questions to see how well they knew each other, and to reveal some of the best and worst advice they had ever given.

Next, honorary guest, Dick Smothers from “The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour,” led the crowd through improv exercises to break the ice, get people comfortable with each other. The improv segment got lots of laughs and transitioned into more mingling among the attendees.

The lights dimmed for the premiere of the CLE movie “The Appeal of Mentorship,” starring Mr. Smothers and Fourth District Court of Appeal Judge Cory J. Ciklin, Judge Dorian K. Damoorgian, and Judge Mark W. Klingensmith. In the film, Mr. Smothers was arguing for the value of mentorships. After his compelling arguments interspersed with interviews from actual attorneys, judges, and law students on the subject, he easily won his case.

Following the screening, the night concluded with a quick awards ceremony fashioned after the upcoming Oscars.

The night was a success – not only did the BCBA demonstrate the value of mentorships through guest speakers sharing their experiences, but a number of new mentoring matches resulted from the event. The BCBA’s Mentorship CLE-in-a-Box packages, distributed at the event, contain all of the materials – teaching guides, reference materials, and a copy of the movie. The BCBA encourages anyone interested in being a mentor or mentee, or who would like additional information, to contact them. The BCBA looks forward to sharing mentorship success stories in future editions.
**LAWYERS ADVISING LAWYERS**

Lawyers Advising Lawyers (LAL) gives experienced attorneys a platform to assist new lawyers with issues they have previously dealt with during their career. This service utilizes technology to provide immediate interaction by phone or email with other lawyers working in different parts of the state. The program is designed to supplement, rather than act as a substitute for, the exercise of independent judgment by the attorney seeking assistance. To qualify as an advisor, attorneys must have a minimum of five years of experience in their respective area(s) of advice and must be a member of The Florida Bar in good standing. Participating advisors will receive one CLE credit per consultation for a total of five CLE credits per year. Click here to access a Form Request for LAL Advisor CLE Credit.

**LEGAL ACCELERATOR**

The Legal Accelerator is best described as a “virtual mentor” and serves as a one-stop hub for guidance on a variety of common issues encountered by young lawyers. The Legal Accelerator website is housed behind The Florida Bar member portal and can only be accessed by licensed Florida attorneys.

Over the years, the Young Lawyers Division has produced substantial content for its members including how-to videos, webinars, CLEs, and blog posts. The Legal Accelerator has aggregated all of this previously existing content into one location and added thousands of new mentoring videos filmed by experienced practitioners, including judges.

Similar to Google, Legal Accelerator is easily searchable and organized in a user-friendly manner, allowing lawyers to efficiently and effectively find answers to their questions. The content located on the Legal Accelerator is divided into five main categories: 1) Professional Development; 2) Ethics & Professionalism; 3) Substantive Legal Questions; 4) The Florida Bar; and 5) Health & Wellness. Additionally, the content is labeled with multiple clickable descriptive tags for even easier searchability across the website.

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**The Florida Bar v. Robert Joseph Ratiner, No. SC13-539 (Fla. 2018):** On February 22, 2018, the Florida Supreme Court determined that attorney Robert Ratiner would be disbarred, effective immediately. The decision came after a special referee found Mr. Ratiner guilty of violating the Rules of Professional Conduct. The Court held that Mr. Ratiner’s professional behavior necessitated disbarment.

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**Words to the Wise**

- Henry Latimer Center for Professionalism @FloridaBarProfessionalism 15 Apr
  - “New technology is common, new thinking is rare.” — Sir Peter Blake

- Henry Latimer Center for Professionalism @FloridaBarProfessionalism 15 Apr
  - “Technology is a useful servant but a dangerous master.” — Christian Lous Lange

- Henry Latimer Center for Professionalism @FloridaBarProfessionalism 15 Apr
  - “The real problem is not whether machines think but whether men do.” — B.F. Skinner