

# MINUTES

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROFESSIONALISM (SCOP)

### Virtual Annual Meeting 2020

Thursday, June 18, 2020 from 8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. via Zoom

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The meeting was called to order at 8:36 a.m. by Kirsten Davis, Chair

**Committee Members in Attendance:** Kirsten Davis, The Honorable Miesha Darrough, The Honorable Carolyn Ruth Bell, James Stepan, Sarah Zabel, Russell Landy, Amy Borman, Nexcy De La Rosa-Monroe, Charise Morgan-Joseph, William Lewis, John Cardillo, Jordan Kirby, Abby Spears, Matthew Feely, Cosme Caballero, Elizabeth Hunter, Jason Berger, Sara Peacock, John Schifino, Ita Neymotin, The Honorable Jack Weiss, Howard Marsee, The Honorable Gisela Laurent, The Honorable Robert McCune, Jr., Shannon Nash, Larry Smith, Maureen Daughton, Karla Ellis, The Honorable Patricia Barksdale, The Honorable Hetal Desai, Josh Wright, The Honorable Daliah Weiss, Ariel Rodriguez, The Honorable Suzanne Van Wyk, Michele Gavagni, Magie Ozarowski, Alex Williams, Jamie Karpman, Steven Davis, BOG Liaison

**Florida Bar Staff:** Rebecca Bandy, Director of the Center for Professionalism; Katie Young, Assistant Director of the Center for Professionalism; Beth Kirkland, Program Coordinator, for the Center for Professionalism; Tabitha Guinot, FSU COL Extern for the Center for Professionalism

**Guests:** Gary Lesser, running for Florida Bar President-Elect

#### I. Introduction of Guest Speakers: Kirsten Davis

- A. **Gary Lesser, running for President-Elect of The Florida Bar:** Mr. Lesser shared his experience of nine years on The Florida Bar Board of Governors and has spent a lot of time on professionalism/ethics issues. He asks for consideration in the upcoming election in March.
- B. **Steven Davis, running for President-Elect of The Florida Bar:** Mr. Davis shared his hopes for The Bar and as Communications Chair he is looking into several opportunities to help support and improve the lives of Florida's attorneys as we move forward into the post-COVID era.

#### II. Opening Remarks and Chair's Report: Kirsten Davis

- A. Ms. Davis shared that she will be terming off the committee at the end of the month after six years of service.
- B. [The Professionalism Handbook](#) has been updated and is now available in digital format on the Center's website.
- C. [Legal Professionalism in the Electronic Age](#) is a new guide that was created by The Center along with consult from committee members. It serves as a best practice tool for lawyers and judges to use when conducting virtual hearings.

- D. **Local Professionalism Panels (LPPs):** Ms. Davis has been collecting data on the LPPs, now that the Commission is disbanded. Since these panels are circuit-driven by the chief judge of each circuit there has not been a lot of communication or information sharing between the circuits regarding the panels.

Ms. Davis and The Center will be hosting a Local Professionalism Panel Summit during Annual Convention. The chairs of the panels along with the chief judges are invited for a two-hour discussion in hopes of giving the panels a chance to talk about their work and any issues they have experienced.

- E. Ms. Davis shared information regarding the recent communications received regarding concerns about the Confederate statues located in front of courthouses. It has been asked if The Bar or Committees of The Bar will take a stance on the issue and determine if those are in fact representations of the justice system or not. This may be a topic of discussion for the committee in the near future.

### III. **Report from the Center for Professionalism: Rebecca Bandy**

- A. The Center hosted the first ever virtual awards ceremony to honor the three professionalism award recipients. Ms. Bandy shared that the ceremony had a great turnout despite the technical difficulties. Each recipient will receive their official award through mail.
- B. Ms. Bandy shared that The Center along with The Bar's Communication Department worked together to update the [Best Practices for Professional Electronic Communication](#) in order to reflect new shift to virtual communications. This document can be found on The Center's webpage under professionalism resources.
- C. Ms. Bandy was a panelist during a Judicial Roundtable meeting in Miami on Mental Health and Wellness. She also spoke at the Clearwater Bar Association's CLE on Mental Health and Wellness as well as participated in the Escambia County Bar Association's CLE on Mental Health and Wellness. Additionally, she recently virtually presented to the Florida Association of County Attorneys. Katie Young recently presented virtually for Tallahassee Women's Lawyers.
- D. The Center's webpage has undergone some updates. It now has additional tabs for Professionalism Podcasts as well as a tab for the *Engle* grant, which holds information and resources that The Center is putting together in collaboration with the YLD.
- E. Ms. Bandy announced the launching of the [#ProTipTuesday](#) Campaign for social media. These are short videos, a minute or less, by real-life attorneys giving real-life professionalism advice for law students and young lawyers to use. If interested, please email the short videos on professionalism related topics to Ms. Bandy and The Bar's Communication Department will work to get them edited and ready to post on social media and The Center's webpage.

### IV. **Reports from Working Group Chairs:**

- A. **Awards:** Elizabeth Hunter, Chair

Great nominations were received this year for all three awards. The 2020 award recipients are: The Honorable Marcia Morales Howard (Judicial Award), Professor Phyllis Kotey (Law School Faculty Award), NSU's LRW Student Outreach Program (Group Professionalism Award).

**B. Education and Resources:** Howard Marsee, Chair

1. Mr. Marsee shared that he is terming off the committee in July. This group has not been as active the past couple of months due to the pandemic. Not as many articles were received as hoped. Members are encouraged to continue to submit professionalism related articles for publication in *The Professional*.
2. Ms. Bandy shared that the current edition of the newsletter is being worked on by Katie Young and should be published soon. In the future, *The Professional* will also be available in a "blog" style format with searchable tags that should make it more modern and easier to navigate.
3. For the second consecutive year, The Center has partnered with FSU College of Law's Professionalism Program to host a writing contest. The winning article will be published in the upcoming newsletter. The Center is willing to do the same at other law schools throughout the State.

**C. Gender Bias:** Magie Ozarowski, Chair

1. Tallahassee Women's Lawyers and The Center intended to co-host a CLE on Gender Bias in May at FSU College of Law; however, with COVID that did not happen. Ms. Ozarowski is hopeful to still carryout the CLE although it may be virtual.
2. Ms. Ozarowski shared that Tallahassee Women's Lawyers had an amazing presenter at their June meeting. The presentation was by a local Tallahassee attorney who is a transgender woman and spoke on the many trials and challenges that transgender attorneys face. Ms. Ozarowski highly recommends her to any member interested in this important topic.
3. Ms. Davis spoke about the recent Supreme Court Opinion on the definition of "sex" and "gender" and what they mean as far as interacting with one another in the profession and how this will soon be shifting. This topic may be something this working group will want to look further into.

**D. Health and Wellness:** Sarah Zabel, Chair

1. Ms. Zabel shared that this working group had met right before the pandemic to discuss putting together a series of podcasts. The podcasts would feature: a mental health professional to address mental health issues in the legal community, an attorney who is currently experiencing or has experienced mental health issues, and an attorney who has decided to leave the profession because of mental health. She is hopeful to still carryout this podcast soon.
2. Ms. Bandy shared that she was recently featured on a podcast by The Bar on the topic of working remotely and the mental health and work-life balance issues that come along with it.

**E. Mentoring Initiatives:** Hon. Suzanne Van Wyk, Chair

The working group had planned a CLE on mentoring with a panel where Ms. Bandy would discuss some of the challenges of mentoring millennials along with a mentoring pair to discuss their experience. However, this was postponed due to COVID. Judge Van Wyk is looking at the possibility of doing it as a series of webinars.

- V. Recognition of Termed-off Committee Members:** Rebecca Bandy-- The Center has not received the certificates for the termed-off committee members at this time, but those will be mailed to members as soon as they are received.
- VI. Recognition of Outstanding Leadership:** Rebecca Bandy--Ms. Bandy recognized the committee's outgoing chair, Kirsten Davis, and thanked her for her leadership and service to the committee over the years. Ms. Bandy is looking forward to working with Ms. Davis again in the future.
- VII. Vision of Incoming Chair: Ita Neymotin-- Ms. Neymotin shared her vision for the upcoming year which focuses on upholding professionalism and civility to the highest standards of excellence.**
- VIII. Closing Remarks:**
- A. Larry Smith shared his thoughts on the importance of diversity as an integral part of professionalism. He would like to see it included as crucial part of everything we do in the profession.
- 1. Ms. Bandy will update the webpage to include a diversity and inclusion tab and will be cognizant of the topic when developing the upcoming working groups.**
  - Ms. Davis shared that she believes the Professionalism Expectations could be updated as they do not directly address the lawyer's role in diversity, inclusion, and equity.
  - 3. Ms. Bandy would like to compose a reading list of books on diversity, inclusion, and the justice system. Please send her your recommendations.**
- B. Kirsten Davis recognized Elizabeth Hunter as the new vice-chair of the committee.
- C. John Cardillo shared about the importance of mentoring and how much impact it has on everything in the profession from health and well-being to professionalism. It does not have to just be for young lawyers, but also experienced lawyers who may be experiencing hardships.
- D. Minutes from the last meeting were approved.

**October 7-9, 2020:**

**The Florida Bar Fall Meeting of Rules and Other Select Committees, Tampa Airport Marriott (TENTATIVE)**