

The Henry Latimer Center for Professionalism and the
Standing Committee on Professionalism present

Our Favorite Mistakes: Professionalism and Ethics Tips to Stay Out of Trouble

Thursday, June 22, 2023, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

COURSE CLASSIFICATION: BASIC

Course 7443

cyoung@floridabar.org

OVERVIEW

Have you seen the “Pro Tip Tuesday” videos by the Henry Latimer Center for Professionalism? This seminar brings those tips and more to you via a panel and interactive table discussion to help Florida lawyers maintain professionalism and ethics while staying out of trouble.

LECTURE PROGRAM

Welcome and Introductions by Jason Berger, Chair Standing Committee on Professionalism (5 minutes)

PART 1 – Panel Discussion (30 minutes)

The Moderator will ask panelists to share their professionalism and ethics tips on the following subjects (5 min per subject):

- Avoiding malpractice
- Avoiding bar grievances
- Gender bias
- Diversity and inclusion
- Mentorship
- Views from the bench

BREAK (10 minutes)

PART 2 – Breakout Roundtable Discussions (30 minutes)

- Each table will have a facilitated discussion led by one of the panelists and other members of the Standing Committee on Professionalism (tables of 10 people – 20 tables max)
- Each table will also have a “reporter” to input participant responses in a Google Drive document. Some responses will be shared with the participants during the large group discussion, but all will be available as post-course materials sent to the participants
- Moderator will ask panelists to share their professionalism and ethics tips on the following subjects:
 - Q1: What is the one tip you would tell a young lawyer to help them be a better lawyer?
 - Q2: Why is professionalism so important to our profession?
 - Q3: How has professionalism made you a better lawyer?

PART 3 – Large Group Discussions (15 minutes)

The facilitator from each table will share the “best” response to each of the 3 roundtable discussion questions with the group at large

Questions & Answers (10 minutes)

SPEAKERS

Scott Westheimer, 2023-2024 Florida Bar President -Elect

Incoming Florida Bar President, Scott Westheimer is a partner at Syrett Meshad, PA. His practice primarily involves representing plaintiffs in personal injury matters and various aspects of commercial litigations. He has also handled complex personal injury matters involving motorcycle, medical malpractice, premises liability, and product liability. He has served on The Florida Bar’s Board of Governors since 2013. Scott was raised primarily in Sarasota and graduated from Riverview High School in 1989. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree in History, with high honors, from the University of Florida in 1993, and in 1996, received his Juris Doctorate, with high honors, from the University of Florida Levin College of Law.

Michael Tanner, Past Florida Bar President

Mike Tanner is a seasoned legal strategist with more than thirty years of experience. He is dedicated to bringing that depth of experience and perspective to every client matter in which he is involved. Mike’s primary areas of practice include complex litigation, appellate (state and federal courts) and election law. The 73rd president of The Florida Bar, Mike is board certified in both civil trial and business litigation by The Florida Bar Board of Legal Specialization and Education and he is rated “AV-Preeminent” by Martindale-Hubbell, Inc.

Edward Blumberg, Past Florida Bar President

Edward Blumberg received his B.A. degree from the University of Georgia and his J.D. degree from the College of William and Mary. In 1975, he was admitted to The Florida Bar and is a member of the Trial Bar of the U.S. District Court, U.S. Court of Appeals, 11th Circuit and the U.S. Supreme Court. Edward Blumberg has been a trial lawyer for more than three decades and is a shareholder with Deutsch Blumberg & Caballero, P.A., specializing in plaintiffs' personal injury and wrongful death, products liability, medical malpractice and insurance coverage matters. He is board certified in Civil Trial Law by The Florida Bar and by the National Board of Trial Advocacy. He is a past president of The Florida Bar and has written and lectured extensively in the area of torts and ethics. Edward Blumberg currently serves on the Board of Trustees of the National Judicial College and is listed in the Best Lawyers in America.

Jason Berger, Chair Standing Committee on Professionalism

In 1998, Jason Berger graduated from the University of Florida, College of Law with honors. He proudly served the people of the State of Florida as an Assistant State Attorney for 11 years, 8 years of which he served as a supervising attorney. In 2010, Mr. Berger opened his law practice, and since that time the Law Office of Jason D. Berger has proudly served the people of the Treasure Coast of Florida. Through his experiences, Mr. Berger has garnered a tremendous amount of courtroom skills, management skills, people skills, and problem-solving skills. He is committed to fighting for clients seeking a just outcome. Mr. Berger has personally tried and/or supervised well over one hundred jury trials. His trial experience includes the most serious of cases, including wrongful death, first-degree murder, DUI manslaughter, and sex crimes. In his family law and estate planning practice, Mr. Berger has tempered his vast courtroom and trial experiences with his common sense and people skills, while remaining committed to serving his clients with the utmost diligence, professionalism, and devotion as he did while serving the people of the State of Florida. Mr. Berger was appointed by the Governor to serve on the 19th Judicial Circuit Nominating Commission, and served as the Chair. He was appointed by the Chief Judge for the United States Southern District of Florida to serve on the Federal Magistrate Judge Merit Selection Panel, and he was twice appointed by the President of the Florida State Senate to serve on the State of Florida Commission on Ethics. Mr. Berger believes in actively supporting his community. He has served as a director/officer of multiple non-profit organizations.

Rebecca Bandy, Director Henry Latimer Center for Professionalism

Rebecca J. Bandy serves as the director of The Florida Bar's Henry Latimer Center for Professionalism. She joined the center as assistant director in March 2017. Prior to joining The Florida Bar, Ms. Bandy was an associate attorney at the Law Offices of Thomas L. Powell, PA in Tallahassee, where she litigated in the areas of family and criminal law. She most recently taught college level courses at Lawton Chiles High School, where she helped establish the school's award-winning mock trial team along with The Honorable Mark Walker, The Honorable David Frank, and attorney David Grimes. Ms. Bandy previously served as the director of alumni relations at the Florida State University College of Business and as the assistant director of alumni and development at the Florida State University College of Law. She earned her Juris Doctor from the Florida State University College of Law. A native of the tiny town of Hilliard in Nassau County, Florida, she earned her Bachelor's in Communications with Honors from Jacksonville University and her teaching credentials at Georgia Southern University.

Since becoming director, Ms. Bandy has attended the National Legal Mentoring Symposium in Columbia, South Carolina; the Search Inside Yourself Institute at Georgetown University; the National Mindfulness Summit in Washington, DC; and has received a Mental Health First Aid certificate. She currently serves on the American Bar Association's Standing Committee on Professionalism. She regularly speaks to legal professionals, law school students, and Florida Bar staff on general professionalism, mindfulness-based emotional intelligence, the impacts of loneliness, mentoring, networking, gratitude, resilience, interpersonal communication skills, active listening, implicit bias, and team building.

Judge Hetal Desai, Florida Division of Administrative Hearings

Hetal Desai is an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) with the Division of Administrative Hearings. Judge Desai is the host of "Never Contemplated," a podcast produced by the Center for Professionalism that shines a light on legal trailblazers in the judiciary, public service, and legal education. She graduated with honors from both Florida State University with a degree in Economics, and from the University of Florida, College of Law. Over the past 20+ years, she has worked as a regulatory economist, a law clerk at the First District Court of Appeal, and at commercial and employment litigation firms in Miami, New York, and Tallahassee. She also served as an Assistant City Attorney for the City of Tallahassee for almost nine years handling employment, ethics, public records, and land use issues. Judge Desai serves on the Florida Bar SCOP and local Grievance committees. She is an active member of Leadership Tallahassee, Leadership Florida, and serves on the board of the North Florida Community Trust Foundation.

Chardean Hill, Vice Chair Standing Committee on Professionalism

Chardean Hill is a sole-practitioner and owner of CMH Law & Dispute Resolution, LLC located in Brandon, Florida. She opened her own firm in May 2019, where her focus is on alternative dispute resolution, primarily mediations and arbitrations. She also does legal ethics defense and risk management for Florida lawyers and represents applicants for admission before the Florida Board of Bar Examiners. She is a Florida Supreme Court Certified Circuit Civil, Family, and County Court Mediator and a Florida Supreme Court Qualified Arbitrator. She has mediated or arbitrated disputes involving small claims, landlord-tenant, contract & indebtedness, insurance subrogation claims, commercial evictions, personal injury, probate, guardianship, first-party and third-party insurance claims, and hurricane damage. She is also a pro bono program mediator and arbitrator for The Florida Bar's Grievance Mediation and Fee Arbitration Program. She also lectures on a variety of ethics topics for various local bar associations and law schools. Prior to opening her own firm, she worked for The Florida Bar for about 14 years, mostly in Lawyer Regulation handling attorney grievance proceedings. Currently, she serves as a Board Member of the Ferguson-White American Inn of Court, on the Executive Council of The Florida Bar's Alternative Dispute Resolution Section, and volunteers her time as Youth Director for girls ages 6-18 in one of her civic organizations. She received her Juris Doctor from St. Thomas University (May 2006), her Master of Science in Human Resource Management from the H. Wayne Huizenga School of Business and Entrepreneurship at Nova Southeastern University (October 2001), and her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a minor in Communications from the University of South Florida (April 1997).

Steven B. Lesser, Standing Committee on Professionalism

Steven B. Lesser chairs Becker & Poliakoff's national Construction Law and Litigation practice group. Mr. Lesser is Board Certified in construction law by the Florida Bar and devotes his practice exclusively to construction law and litigation, including governmental construction claims and defense and hotel/condominium disputes. He is a Fellow of the American College of Construction Lawyers and in 2022, he was elected to the Board of Governors for a 3-year term. He has received several distinguished awards from the Florida Bar and American Bar Association (ABA) relative to his work in the construction industry. In 2019, he was the recipient of the ABA Cornerstone Award that honors a member of the Forum who has rendered long-term exceptional service to the construction industry, to the public, and to the legal profession.

Magdalena Ozarowski, Vice Chair Standing Committee on Professionalism

Magie is a graduate of the University of California, Berkeley and the University of Florida College of Law. She started her career in California, in private practice. For the last 10+ years, Magie has been working as a government attorney for the State of Florida, currently serving as the Deputy General Counsel for the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. In addition to her work with the Standing Committee on Professionalism, Magie volunteers her time for the Florida Bar as an alum of the Leadership Academy, and on the Second Circuit Grievance Committee. She has also served as a dedicated Guardian ad Litem volunteer since 2014. Currently, she also serves on the Second Circuit Pro Bono Committee, as a Board member of the Stafford Inn of Court, and on the Board of the Tallahassee Women Lawyers.

CLE Credit

General: 1.5 hours
Professionalism: 1.0 hour
Ethics: 0.5 hour