

The Better Lawyer

an online newsletter from the NORTH CAROLINA FOUNDATION BAR ASSOCIATION Professionalism Committee

“Pathways to Professionalism” Scheduled Dec. 7

How do we become effective professionalism mentors for younger attorneys? What can we do, as a profession, to ensure that our guiding principles are competence, civility, dedication to serving clients, improvement of the justice system, advancement of the rule of law, and service to the community? These questions will be the topics of discussion on Friday, Dec. 7, at the N.C. Bar Center in Cary. In “Pathways to Professionalism,” distinguished panelists will examine law firm mentoring models, mandatory mentoring rules from other jurisdictions, “private sector” mentoring initiatives, and whether we should adopt a mandatory civility code in North Carolina. [Click here to register online.](#)

Professional Networking for Lawyers: Cast Your Net - Avoid Ethical Snags

Lawyers in both small and large firms are expected to participate in business development. Becoming “rain makers” is an essential skill where we may lack concrete training. As lawyers focus on networking with the goal of bringing new business to their firms, they should be aware of the Rules of Professional Conduct governing attorney contact with potential clients. Picture the following scenario - a lawyer attends an industry fair for businesses of the type the lawyer would like to represent. The lawyer’s goal is to meet new people and develop relationships that may lead to a client-lawyer relationship. For the first time, the lawyer meets several industry representatives. May the lawyer offer his or her legal services or ask directly for the representative’s business? [Click here](#) to find out by reading North Carolina Rule of Professional Conduct 7.3.

N.C. Law Schools Put Professionalism in Action

By the time you read this article, the fall semester will be winding down for North Carolina law students pursuing a JD degree. December and - gulp - final exams are creeping closer, as first year law students around our state study around the clock. These 1Ls, who will make up the Class of 2010, started their school year with an introduction to professionalism. At Campbell law, the professionalism curriculum spans an entire year. This fall’s curriculum included a professionalism dinner at Raleigh’s Cardinal Club, where former Chief Justice I. Beverly Lake Jr. was honored. In Chapel Hill, Judge Linda Stephens administered a professionalism oath to over 240 standing members of UNC’s 1L

class. In Charlotte, in conjunction with the Chief Justice’s Commission on Professionalism, Charlotte Law students learned about professionalism from Superior Court Judge Yvonne Mims Evans and a panel of attorneys she moderated. At Elon, incoming students heard from State Bar leaders and were introduced to their attorney preceptors who serve as mentors for Elon law students. Wake’s orientation week included a Habitat for Humanity build and talk by attorney Michael Wells. Later, attorney John Sarratt kicked off the school’s 1L monthly professionalism series with a talk about alcohol and the legal profession. N.C. Central’s law school held its annual 1L orientation program sponsored by the CJCP. District Court Judge Beverly Scarlett was the keynote speaker, and over 30 alumni talked about ethics and professionalism with NCCU students in small groups.

New Law School Dean Speaks to Forsyth County Bar

Blake D. Morant, the new dean of Wake Forest Law School, spoke on Oct. 8 at a Forsyth County Bar Association luncheon. Dean Morant received his bachelor’s degree in 1975 from the University of Virginia, where he received his JD degree in 1978. After graduation, he served in the Army Judge Advocate General Corps and then practiced law for seven years in Washington, D.C. His academic career began in 1988. Dean Morant held positions at several law schools before coming to Wake Forest. Dean Morant spoke to the assembled Forsyth County Bar attorneys about the importance of providing a sound education in ethics to law students. He emphasized the value of clinical and mentoring programs, as well as classroom education. [Click here for more on Dean Morant.](#)

The Renaissance Lawyer Award

For the third consecutive year, the Bar Association plans to honor a North Carolina attorney with the prestigious H. Brent McKnight Renaissance Lawyer Award. Each Award recipient is an attorney who, like Judge McKnight: has demonstrated excellence in the pursuit of his or her profession and respects others in doing so; serves as an example by inspiring others to renew their commitments to professionalism, integrity, intellectual achievement, civility, and service in the practice of law; and provides pro bono services and service to the profession and the community. Plan now to make your nominations through the NCBA Professionalism Committee in spring 2008. [Click here to review the resolution](#) creating the award.