

## The Judicial Performance Evaluation Program of the North Carolina Bar Association

The North Carolina Bar Association has established the Judicial Performance Evaluation Program to enhance the performance and increase the accountability of North Carolina trial judges, to provide judges with constructive feedback for improvement and to inform the electorate before each general election of the evaluation rating of each trial judge on the ballot as either “qualified” or “not qualified.”

### **Who is conducting the program?**

Program oversight has been assigned to the NCBA Judicial Performance Evaluation (JPE) Committee comprised of equivalent numbers of retired judges, retired attorneys and laypersons. An independent consultant, who will employ statistically and scientifically reliable methods for designing and distributing the survey, will compile and calculate data and comments provided by survey respondents.

### **Who is being surveyed?**

Lawyers and courtroom personnel (bailiffs, clerks, court reporters, etc.) who have observed a judge’s performance will be asked to evaluate that judge using a survey developed by the JPE Committee and its consultant.

### **How many surveys are being conducted?**

Two. The first survey in summer 2009 will involve those trial court judges who will face election in 2010. The evaluation of each judge, based upon this survey, will be released to the public. The second survey will take place spring 2010 and will involve only judges new to the bench between July 2008 and March 2009 and those for whom insufficient response totals were received during the initial 2008 pilot survey. The results of this survey will be released to the judges for self improvement, but not to the public.

### **What does the JPE Survey entail?**

The survey will evaluate, on a five-point scale ranging from “Excellent” to “Unacceptable,” the following areas of judicial conduct and temperament universally considered as qualities possessed by outstanding trial court judges:

- Legal Ability
- Integrity and Impartiality
- Communication Skills
- Professionalism
- Administrative Skills

### **What will be done with the survey results?**

The JPE Committee will review the results of the surveys and assign a rating of “qualified” or “not qualified” and notify each judge. Judges rated as “not qualified” will have an opportunity to appeal to the JPE Committee before evaluation ratings are released to the public. Evaluation ratings will be released prior to the filing deadline for judicial offices in early 2010.

### **What can you do to help?**

Participate! The JPE Committee seeks the assistance of every lawyer in North Carolina to help make this groundbreaking statewide program successful. Surveys will be made available to all NCBA members by e-mail the first week of June. E-mail addresses of nonmembers are being accessed through other organizations in order to make the survey available to all North Carolina lawyers. Surveys must be completed by mid-summer. Nonmember attorneys who wish to participate should direct e-mails to [jpe@ncbar.org](mailto:jpe@ncbar.org) or call (509) 868-4283.

**Please participate in this important program to help ensure  
that qualified judges are serving North Carolina and its citizens.**