

Judicial District Bar Professionalism Programs

A Guide for Local Bar Associations

A Program of:



Melvin F. Wright, Jr., Executive Director

901 Corporate Center Drive

Raleigh, North Carolina 27607

(919) 890-1455

www.nccourts.org/Courts/CRS/Councils/Professionalism

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The Judicial District Bar Professionalism Program

Professionalism in Practice: A Local Perspective

Officially started in 2004, the Judicial District Bar Professionalism Program serves as a joint effort between the Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism (CJCP), Lawyer's Mutual Liability Insurance Company and local judicial district Bar associations. As a part of the program, the CJCP has either the Chief Justice or the Chief Judge of the NC Court of Appeals attend.

The programs are for the local Bar and are conducted by the local Bar. The program requires a committee from the local Bar to design their own program and speakers, with input and materials from the CJCP and Lawyers' Mutual, including information on how to start a local Bar Professionalism Support Initiative (PSI) program. Lawyer's Mutual supplies the notebooks for all attendees. Both Lawyer's Mutual and the CJCP pay for a luncheon for all attendees. In addition, other sponsors are encouraged to contribute.

The Judicial District Bar Professionalism Program is meant to serve as an event for the members to get together, socialize, celebrate the practice of law, tell war stories and humor and discuss professionalism issues that face their Bar. Each program qualifies for three hours of free CLE credit, with no sponsorship fees. If a Bar wishes to add an hour of substance abuse/mental health CLE credit, the CJCP can arrange for this with the NC State Bar Lawyer Assistance Program or the NC Bar Association's BarCARES program.

Please call the CJCP at (919) 890-1455 if your district is interested in having this program.

The Judicial District Bar Professionalism Program
By Melvin F. Wright, Jr.

The Judicial District Bar Professionalism Program (JDBPP) was formed in response to a need for lawyers to celebrate the practice of law. Too often, our profession is the butt of tasteless jokes, the subject of media attacks, public distrust and contempt, and the storyline for outrageous TV shows, movies and novels. How often do we get to sit around and enjoy the camaraderie of other members of the legal profession? To talk about all the good things that makes our profession great? To touch the very fabric of the patchwork that brought us to it? To share war stories with one another, laugh about something that happened in court, or help each other resolve a complex situation – whether personal or professional?

When was the last time we were able to look at our profession, our colleagues and ourselves and be proud of what we do, what we stand for and the fact that we are indeed assets to our communities?

How well do you know the other members of your Bar? Do you know who in your Bar actually played shortstop for the AAA Mets in 1963? Do you know who in your Bar took a now famous Hollywood actress to the prom? Do you know who in your Bar holds the NCAA record for the three-mile run?

There is no doubt that within our profession, and within all professions, a few bad apples reside. They do things that make our skin crawl. They do things that appall us, even scare us and give us all a bad name. Rather than combat it, or do something to counter the ill image presented to the public, we have allowed it to define our profession. That is an unfortunate resignation. One way to fix our image problem is to remember why we came to this profession and to once again, know each other as colleagues and even adversaries – but not as enemies.

The charge of the Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism (CJCP) is to enhance professionalism among North Carolina judges, lawyers, and law students. In conjunction with Lawyer's Mutual Liability Insurance Company, the CJCP has implemented the Judicial District Bar Professionalism Program. Developed with basic requirements for the 3.0 hours of ethics/professional responsibility CLE credit and the local Bar's desires and needs, the program is designed by and for the local Bar, focusing on local professionalism issues, stories and humor.

Lawyer's Mutual provides notebooks and CDs for each attendee and also helps sponsor a meal. The CJCP sponsors the CLE credit and also contributes toward the meal, so that everyone in attendance receives free credit and a free meal. In addition, either the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court or the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals attends and addresses the attendees as a keynote speaker. The CLE portion of the program lasts approximately one half day.

The programs are best attended when they have the active support of both District and Superior Court judges and the District Attorney, as well as their participation. The Chief District Court Judge and the Senior Resident Superior Court Judge will typically cancel court for either the afternoon or the entire day so that all lawyers can attend and participate.

Since beginning this effort with the 27B Judicial District in Shelby in 2003, the CJCP has sponsored eighteen District and/or County Bar programs around the state. If your local Bar would like to schedule a program for 2007, please call the CJCP at 919-571-4762.

This article is in the Winter 2006 edition of The North Carolina State Bar Journal.

Judicial District Bar Professionalism Program

Entity Responsibilities:

CJCP:

- Sponsor for Continuing Legal Education
- Point of Contact for program administration
- Additional documents printing and packing into notebooks
- Professionalism Support Initiative (PSI) videos/DVDs and associated publications
- Attaining the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court or the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals as the keynote speaker
- Any costs to the luncheon over \$500, if there is no additional sponsor secured by local Bar
- Housing, preparing and transporting notebooks
- Attend, when necessary, planning meetings during preparation phase
- Can use own Audio/Visual if not available at meeting location

Lawyer's Mutual:

- Ordering and purchasing notebooks
- Making changes to notebooks when requested
- \$500 toward meal, if the local Bar does not provide a sponsor

Local Bar Association:

- Provides a Bar Point of Contact for the program
- Provides a moderator for the program and local Bar speakers
- Establishes a date and agenda no later than forty-five days out
- Coordinates for a location with sufficient seating, Audio/Visual, registration area and catering location
- Coordinates for a letter from the Resident Superior Court Judge and the Chief District Court Judge, inviting and encouraging all lawyers to attend, and closing court for that date and block of time.
- Provides any local documents for inclusion in the notebook to the CJCP no later than one week prior to the program
- Provides someone to check in registrants, take names and Bar numbers, and hand out notebooks, if the RSVP list is 100 plus attendees
- Ensures attendee list with Bar numbers get to the CJCP at least two days prior to program
- Advertises program to include RSVPs no later than one week prior to program date
- Provides expected number of attendees to CJCP no later than one week prior to the program

Sample Letter for Judges

Addressee

Re: ____ Judicial District Bar Professionalism Program – (Date)

Dear Local Bar Member,

We are pleased to announce a free CLE program for the ____ Judicial District on (Date) at (Time) at the (Location) in (City/Town), celebrating professionalism and the practice of law. It will include a free (lunch/dinner) at (Time).

Appellate Court Member(s) (Names) will participate as presenters, along with these outstanding speakers: (list all speakers on agenda). Each attendee will receive 3.0 hours of free CLE credit for ethics and professionalism.

District and Superior Court will be cancelled on the (afternoon/morning) of the (Date) so that all our members can attend this important program. Please RSVP to this invitation no later than (Date) by contacting (Local Contact Name and Number).

Thank you, and we look forward to seeing you on (Date). With warmest personal regards, we remain

Yours truly,

Hon. _____
Superior Court Senior Resident

Hon. _____
Chief District Court Judge

Sample Notebook Cover:



presents

**PROFESSIONALISM
IN PRACTICE:
A LOCAL PERSPECTIVE**

Notebook provided courtesy of



Notebook Table of Contents and Enclosures:

- Welcome from the Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism (CJCP):
 - Information about the CJCP
 - The Professionalism Support Initiative (PSI)
 - Top Ten Elements (Embedded Values) of Professionalism
 - Lawyer's Professionalism Creed
- Ethics and Professionalism: Where Lawyers Go Astray
- 30 Minute Malpractice Checkup
- Office Procedures Manual
- Attorney-Client Agreements
- Calendar & Docket Control
- Statutes of Limitation Index
- Materials from District Bar
- The Risk Management Guide CDs

Sample Agenda #1

Professionalism in Practice: A Local Perspective

Thursday, May 11th, 2006

Holiday Inn Bordeaux – Fayetteville

1:00	Welcome and Opening Remarks	Richard T. Craven, Esq. Melvin F. Wright, Jr. - Executive Director, Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism
1:10	Goals of the Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism for the Profession At-Large	Hon. Sarah Parker – Chief Justice, NC Supreme Court Hon. John C. Martin – Chief Judge, NC Court of Appeals
1:30	Professionalism in the Cumberland County Superior Courts	Hon. E. Lynn Johnson – Senior Resident Superior Court Judge
1:50	Professionalism in the Cumberland County District Courts	Hon. A. Elizabeth Keever – Chief District Court Judge
2:10	Break	
2:15	Professionalism in the Cumberland County Office of the Clerk of Superior Court	Linda H. Priest – Clerk of Superior Court, Cumberland County
2:30	Panel Discussion: Current Direction of the Profession in Cumberland County	Rudolph Singleton, Jr., Esq. Renny W. Deese, Esq. Richard M. Lewis, Esq. James MacRae, Sr., Esq. Hon. Edward A. Pone – District Court Judge
3:00	Break	
3:15	Panel Discussion: The Experience of Mentoring Among the Cumberland County Bar	Hon. Dougald Clark, Jr. – District Court Judge Hon. Kimbrell K. Tucker – District Court Judge Glenn B. Adams, Esq. Jo L. Clouse, Esq. Sanya T. Eller, Esq.
3:45	Break	
4:00	Personal Satisfaction in the Practice of Law	Christopher B. Godwin, Esq.
4:55	Closing Remarks	Lonnie M. Player, Jr., Esq. Ellen Hancox – Trial Court Administrator

Sample Agenda #2

Professionalism in Practice: A Local Perspective

Thursday, April 20th, 2006

Starmount Forest Country Club – Greensboro

2:00	Welcome and Opening Remarks	William R. Hoyle - Douglas, Ravenel, Hardy, Carihfield & Hoyle, LLP and President-Elect, Greensboro Bar Association
2:05	The Bar's Responsibility	Hon. John C. Martin – Chief Judge, NC Court of Appeals
2:20	Enhancing Professionalism Among Lawyers and Judges	Hon. Frank W. Bullock, Jr. – Judge, US District Court for the Middle District of NC
2:35	Professionalism and Law Office Procedures	M. Douglas Berry – Gabriel, Berry & Weston, LLP
2:50	Little Person vs. Big Corporation	Mark V. L. Gray – Gray, Newell, Johnson & Blackmon, LLP
3:05	Break	
3:15	Professionalism: With Regard to Gender	Jeri L. Whitfield – Smith Moore, LLP
3:30	A Layperson's Perspective	J. Thomas Taylor, MAI, SRA – Taylor, Pope & Herring, Inc.
3:45	Perspective from the Bench	Hon. Catherine C. Eagles – Senior Resident Superior Court Judge Hon. Joe E. Turner – Chief District Court Judge
4:05	Break	
4:15	Personal Satisfaction Upon the Legal Practice	Locke Clifford - Clifford, Clendenin, O'Hale & Jones, LLP
4:30	Perspective of a Senior Member of the Bar	Percy L. Wall – Percy L. Wall, PA
4:45	Young Lawyer – Mentoring	Rachel S. Decker – Donaldson & Black, PA Jan Pritchett – Schlosser & Pritchett Steven E. Black – Forman Rossoabi Black, PA
5:05	The Professionalism Support Initiative	Melvin F. Wright, Jr. – Executive Director, the Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism
5:25	Closing Remarks	Kimberly B. Gatling – Smith Moore, LLP

Sample Agenda #3

Professionalism in Practice: A Local Perspective

Thursday, April 28th, 2005

High Point Country Club – High Point

12:30	Luncheon	
1:20	Welcome and Opening Remarks: Professionalism – The Bar’s Responsibility	William E. Wheeler, Esq. , Wyatt Early Wheeler LLP and President, High Point Bar Association
1:30	Enhancing Professionalism Among Lawyer, Judges and Law Students	Hon. I. Beverly Lake, Jr. , Chief Justice, NC Supreme Court
1:45	Break	
2:00	Professionalism and Law Office Procedures	James F. Morgan, Esq. , Morgan, Herring, Morgan, Green, Rosenblutt & Gill, PLLC
2:20	Professionalism: The Minority Perspective	Hon. Sammie Chess, Jr. , Administrative Law Judge
2:40	Professionalism With Regard to Gender	Kathleen E. Nix, Esq. , Nix & Cecil
3:00	Professionalism: Perspective from the District Court Bench	Hon. Joseph E. Turner , Chief District Court Judge, Guilford County
3:20	Break	
3:30	Professionalism: The Layperson’s Perspective	Barbara B. Coughlin, Esq. , Attorney
3:50	Professionalism: The Impact of Personal Satisfaction Upon the Legal Practice	Kenneth W. McAllister, Esq. , The McAllister Law Firm
4:10	Professionalism: Perspective of a Senior Member of the Bar	John Haworth, Esq. , Morgan, Herring, Morgan, Green, Rosenblutt & Gill, PLLC
4:30	The Chief Justice’s Commission on Professionalism and the Professionalism Support Initiative	Melvin F. Wright, Jr. , Executive Director, Chief Justice’s Commission on Professionalism
4:50	Concluding Remarks	William E. Wheeler, Esq. , Wyatt Early Wheeler LLP and President, High Point Bar Association

Sample Agenda #4

Professionalism in Practice: A Local Perspective
Wednesday, March 9th, 2005
 Judicial District 28

12:30	Luncheon	Keynote Speaker - Hon. I. Beverly Lake, Jr. , Chief Justice, NC Supreme Court
1:30	How to be a Professional Lawyer	William A. "Bill" Parker , Attorney Roger T. Smith , President, 28 th Judicial District Bar
1:40	Judges Panel – Professionalism Issues	Hon. C. Phillip Ginn , Superior Court Judge Hon. Gary S. Cash , District Court Judge Hon. Peter L. Roda , District Court Judge Hon. Marvin P. Pope, Jr. , District Court Judge Hon. Robert H. Christy, Jr. , Clerk of Superior Court
2:10	Law Enforcement and Professional Witnesses	Dr. Smith Goodrum , Professional Witness Sgt. Kevin R. Bray , NC State Highway Patrol Sgt. David McKinney , NC State Highway Patrol Buncombe County Sheriff's Department Lt. Timothy Splain , Asheville Police Department
2:40	Recent Development in Public Perception	Sara H. Davis , NC State Bar Councilor Joel B. Stevenson , Attorney
2:55	Lawyer's Image Discussion	Robert J. Deutsch , Attorney James W. Williams , Attorney
3:10	District Attorney and Public Defender – Open File Policy	Ronald L. Moore , District Attorney John R. Hufstader , Public Defender
3:30	Mock Court – Love Court	Patrick S. McCroskey , Attorney A. J. "Jim" Siemans , Attorney Hon. Marvin P. Pope, Jr. , District Court Judge
3:50	Transactional Lawyers Panel	Marc Rudow , Attorney Kerry A. Friedman , Attorney Susan S. Barbour , Attorney
4:15	Celebration Stories	Sharon T. Bartlett , Attorney Roy W. Davis, Jr. , Attorney O. E. Starnes , Attorney J. William Russell , Attorney
4:45	The Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism and the Professionalism Support Initiative	Melvin F. Wright, Jr. , Executive Director, NC Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism
5:00	Adjourn	

Sample Agenda #5

Professionalism in Practice: A Local Perspective

Friday, November 5th, 2004

1st Judicial District

10:00 – 10:05	Opening Remarks	Lisa Harman, Esq. , President, 1 st Judicial District Bar
10:05 – 10:15	Professionalism	Hon. I. Beverly Lake, Jr. , Chief Justice, NC Supreme Court
10:15 – 10:45	Professionalism and the Organized Bar	Michael A. Colombo, Esq. , President-Elect, NC Bar Association
10:45 – 11:45	What the Courts Expect of Attorneys (Panel Discussion)	Hon. J. Richard Parker , Senior Resident Superior Court Judge, 1 st District Hon. Grafton G. Beaman , Chief District Court Judge, 1 st District Steven D. Michael, Esq. , State Bar Councilor, 1 st District Janice McKenzie Cole, Esq. Hon. Lynne W. Pike , Clerk of Superior Court, Pasquotank County Hon. Michael J. McArthur , Clerk of Superior Court, Chowan County
11:45 – 12:15	Professionalism and the Criminal Justice System (Panel Discussion)	Frank R. Parrish , District Attorney, 1 st District R. Andrew Womble , Public Defender, 1 st District W. Mark Spence, Esq. , Aldridge, Seawell, Spence & Felthousen
12:15 – 12:45	Perspectives on Professionalism	L. P. “Tony” Hornthal, Esq. , Hornthal, Riley, Ellis & Maland
12:45 – 1:05	The Chief Justice’s Commission on Professionalism and the Professionalism Support Initiative	Melvin F. Wright, Jr. , Executive Director, NC Chief Justice’s Commission on Professionalism
1:05	LUNCHEON	