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State Bar announces members of skills training task force

Task force to implement practical skills courses, externship requirements, 'low-bono' work, CLEs

By Don J. DeBenedictis

Thirty lawyers, judges and legal academics drew the job Tuesday of figuring out how to ensure future California lawyers have meaningful training in practical lawyering skills before they're admitted to practice.

The State Bar announced the members of a new task force that will implement the recommendations of a previous panel on skills training. Endorsed by the bar's Board of Trustees last month, those proposals would require law students to take 15 units of skills courses or externships in law school. In addition, while in school or shortly after, the students would have to perform 50 hours of pro bono or inexpensive, "low-bono" work for clients. Once admitted, the new lawyers would have to complete 10 hours of skills-related continuing legal education.

Former State Bar President Jon B. Streeter, who led the earlier Task Force on Admissions Regulation Reform, will continue as chairman of the new implementation task force. Other members include legal aid advocates and law firm pro bono coordinators, business representatives, young lawyers, bar trustees and several law deans.

The group also includes leaders from metropolitan bar associations, members of the Committee of Bar Examiners and the deans of two law schools not accredited by the American Bar Association.

The large panel is scheduled to hold its first meeting on Dec. 16 at the bar headquarters in San Francisco. In addition to Streeter, the task force members are:

David Pasternak, Pasternak, Pasternak & Patton ALC

Glenda Corcoran, a State Bar trustee

Patrick M. Kelly of Wilson Elser Moskowitz Edelman & Dicker LLP, the immediate-past president of the State Bar

Alameda County Superior Court Judge Steven A. Brick

Public Utilities Commission Chief Judge Karen V. Clopton

Thomas Jefferson School of Law Professor **Luz E. Herrera**

Scot H. Fishman, Manatt, Phelps & Phillips LLP's pro bono coordinator

Hernan Vera, president of Public Counsel Law Center

Renee G. Chantler, DLA Piper's pro bono coordinator

Mairi S. McKeever, Bar Association of San Francisco's pro bono coordinator

Friday, December 6, 2013

California Supreme Court

State high court debates whether man who possessed child porn can practice law

For the second time in two months, the State Supreme Court is wrestling with the question of when to ban a wrongdoer from bar membership.

Judges and Judiciary

Brown adds 18 superior court judges

Gov. Jerry Brown announced the appointments of 18 new trial court judges Thursday, including eight to Los Angeles County Superior Court .

Professional Liability

Some legal malpractice causes of action may be transferrable

Decades after the creation of the general rule that such claims are not assignable, a court has carved out a narrow exception. By **Jonathan B. Cole, Michael McCarthy and Agung W. Atmaja**

U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit

9th Circuit approves high attorney fee award in low-damage case

An award of almost \$700,000 in attorney fees to a prevailing plaintiff in an employment discrimination case is acceptable even though a jury gave the plaintiff only \$27,000 in damages, a divided 9th Circuit panel held Thursday.

Litigation

New trial date set for former OC attorney accused of false imprisonment

A new trial date was set in the case against Kent W. Easter, a former Orange County attorney accused of false imprisonment of a school volunteer. A pre-trial conference will be held on Jan. 28 while a jury trial has been scheduled for Feb. 11.

Criminal

Prisoner, sentenced as a juvenile to life without parole, seeks early release

A 2012 law that allows those sentenced as juveniles to life without parole to petition for resentencing will face what experts and attorneys believe to be its first test in court on Friday.

California Supreme Court

Can party host be held liable for alcohol-related accident?

The state Supreme Court debated whether the "admission fee" a woman charged to her party the equivalent of selling alcohol that ended with the

Laura D. Cohen, Southwestern Law School's pro bono administrator

Associate Dean Charles D. Weisselberg, UC Berkeley School of Law

Dean Deanell Reese Tacha, Pepperdine University School of Law

Professor Shauna I. Marshall, UC Hastings College of the Law

Dean Lisa Kloppenberg, Santa Clara University School of Law

Dean Gregory J. Brandes, Concord Law School, an unaccredited school

Dean Mitchel L. Winick of Monterey College of Law, a California State Bar accredited school

General Counsel Erika Frank, California Chamber of Commerce in Sacramento

Richard Frankel, Frankel Goldware Ferber LLP

Patti P. White, Littler Mendelson PC

Ireneo A. Reus III, immediate past president of California Young Lawyers

Megan Knize of Kawahito Shraga & Westrick LLP, CYLA board member

Richard J. Burdge Jr., immediate past president, Los Angeles County Bar Association

David M. Balabanian of Bingham McCutchen LLP, past president, Bar Association of San Francisco

San Diego County Deputy District Attorney Marcella O. McLaughlin, president of the San Diego County Bar Association

Stanford Law School Professor Robert Weisberg

Robert A. Shives Jr., associate general counsel, Fujitsu America in San Francisco

Dean **Erwin Chemerinsky** of UC Irvine School of Law, who will be a nonvoting ex officio member

Dean Frank H. Wu of UC Hastings, also an ex officio member

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death of a 19-year-old man.

Intellectual Property

House of Representatives approves Silicon Valley-backed patent bill

Lawyers who favor reducing frivolous patent infringement claims filed by patent holding companies are treating legislation passed Thursday by the U.S. House of Representatives with caution.

Law Practice

Bowman and Brooke opens in San Diego

The product liability firm opened an office this week with two former Morris Polich & Purdy LLP trial attorneys who specialize in life sciences lawsuits.

Corporate Dealmakers

A roundup of recent merger and acquisition and financing activity and the lawyers involved.

Discipline

Disciplinary Actions

Here are summaries of lawyer disciplinary actions taken recently by the state Supreme Court or the Bar Court, listing attorney by name, age, city of residence and date of the court's action.

Criminal

Non-lawyer at San Diego firm pleads guilty to fraud

Eric Phillips, a non-lawyer "senior vice president" of a San Diego-based law firm, pled guilty this week to defrauding hundreds of clients seeking bad credit relief and portraying himself as an attorney with 34 years of experience.

Corporate

Cooley advises San Diego anti-bacterial drugmaker in \$140M sale

The Rempex Pharmaceuticals acquisition is expected to help The Medicines Co. fill a gap in its offerings pipeline and complement the company's Gram-positive product line.

Solo and Small Firms

Personal Touch

Pasadena-based Richardson Harman Ober PC, which handles homeowners association, real estate and employment law, only hires attorneys it knows after a long interview process.

Education

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