

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROFESSIONALISM

The Honorable Stanley P. Klein, Chair

The Standing Committee on Professionalism is charged with responsibility for administration and ongoing oversight of the mandatory course on professionalism, which is required of all newly-admitted active members of the Virginia State Bar. The course encourages attorneys to uphold and elevate the standards of honor, integrity and courtesy in the legal profession. Since institution of the program in 1988, over 16,000 admittees have taken the course—more than half of the current practicing bar in Virginia.

The course faculty is composed of distinguished lawyers and judges representing a broad cross-section of the legal profession in Virginia. Faculty were nominated by their peers and invited by Chief Justice Harry L. Carrico to accept appointment for a three-year term.

The course was offered six times in Northern Virginia, Richmond, Roanoke, Portsmouth and Charlottesville during the 2000–2001 bar year. As course costs continue to rise, especially in the Northern Virginia area, the committee and staff explored less expensive locales.

The format of the course continues to work well, as do the combination of lectures and small group workshops. Several of the opening lectures were revamped last year and the revised agenda has been a success with the students and the faculty. Participants in the workshops discussed professionalism dilemmas facing lawyers. The faculty continued its tradition of excellence in teaching and establishing a rapport with new admittees.

The Chief Justice, who was instrumental in founding the course, continues to demonstrate his enthusiastic support through an inspiring luncheon address at each course. The involvement of our chief judicial officer, as well as the leadership of our bar, emphasizes to new lawyers the bar's commitment to professionalism.

The committee continued to oversee the administrative functions of the course including faculty selection, course material update and faculty training activities. The committee has continued its work to update the video of Chief Justice Carrico and former United States Supreme Court Justice Lewis F. Powell, used in the opening of the course. The new tape should premiere at the faculty training session in October. The committee updated the materials in the small group sessions to reflect more real-life situations. Current and past faculty members submitted ethical dilemmas. The committee will evaluate each and incorporate the best scenarios into the course materials.

Finally, the committee continues to work with the professionalism for law students program co-sponsored by the VSB Section on the Education of Lawyers. This program is in all the Virginia law schools thanks to the diligent work of the Honorable B. Waugh Crigler.

