

Education of Lawyers Section

George A. Somerville, Chair

The purposes of the Section on the Education of Lawyers include, among others, providing opportunities for the exchange of ideas and information and promoting constructive action on legal education issues; providing a vehicle for continuing dialogue and communication on legal education issues among the academic community, the judiciary and the practicing bar in Virginia; sponsoring projects of special interest and relevance to the members of the Section and the Virginia State Bar regarding the education and training of lawyers from their entry into law school and throughout their careers; and conducting programs, publishing and distributing educational and professional materials, and undertaking other activities which will enhance the cooperation and interaction among the law schools, the bench and the practicing bar in Virginia. The Section pursued those purposes during the past year primarily through our newsletter, professionalism programs at Virginia's law schools, and presentation of a "Mini-Conclave on Legal Education" in partnership with the ABA's Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar.

Professor James M. Boland of the Regent University School of Law continues to serve as Editor of the Section's newsletter. We published two excellent issues this year, including Professor Boland's very informative interview with Chief Justice Leroy Hassell in the Spring issue. We are fortunate that Professor Boland has agreed to continue to serve as newsletter Editor for the coming year.

The Professionalism Program for Law Students, developed by this Section and the Standing Committee on Professionalism, was again offered to first-year students at each of Virginia's eight accredited law schools. All sessions were well attended and student evaluations were strongly positive. The program will remain a staple for those beginning the study of law in the Commonwealth. Judge Martin Bass was the Board's Committee Chair for this annual endeavor, and Judge B. Waugh Crigler served as Co-Chair. From a Section Chair's perspective, this is a practically perfect program: it brings great credit to the Section, and it is exceedingly well run by the Committee with no need for assistance or involvement by the Chair or the Board as a whole.

The Mini-Conclave on Legal Education was held at the University of Virginia School of Law on June 8, 2007. William R. Rakes, Esquire, Chair of the ABA Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar, and Thomas A. Edmonds, Esquire, Executive Director of the Virginia State Bar, presented opening remarks, and Dean John C. Jeffries, Jr., welcomed the attendees to the School of Law. Dean Rodney A. Smolla of the T.C. Williams School of Law at the University of Richmond led the first panel discussion, on preparing lawyers for their roles in a global society. Panelists Carolyn B. Lamm, Esquire (White & Case LLP), Dean John Jeffries, Professor Blake D. Morant (Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Professor of Law, Washington & Lee University School of Law), and Dean Mathew D. Staver (Liberty University School of Law) addressed the topic from their varying perspectives. Virginia Supreme Court Justice Elizabeth B. Lacy led the second panel, which included Jeffrey A. Brauch (Dean of the Regent University School of Law), Karen A. Gould,

Esquire (President of the Virginia State Bar), Annamaria Nields (Assistant Dean of the George Mason University School of Law), Judge Cleo E. Powell (Chesterfield County Circuit Court), Clinton W. ("Wes") Shinn (Dean of the Appalachian School of Law), and W. Scott Street, III, Esquire (Secretary of the Virginia Board of Bar Examiners), in an interactive discussion of ways to achieve greater diversity in our profession and bar organizations. Dean W. Taylor Reveley III (Marshall-Wythe School of Law at the College of William & Mary) closed the agenda with an inspiring address on "The Lawyer as Public Citizen."

The Section gratefully acknowledges the generous financial support of the law firms of Christian & Barton; Gentry Locke Rakes & Moore; Hunton & Williams; Michie, Hamlett, Lowry, Rasmussen & Tweel; Oblon, Spivek, McClelland, Maier; Patten, Wornom Hatten & Diamonstein, LC; Troutman Sanders LLP; and Vandeventer Black LLP to the Mini-Conclave on Legal Education. Their support was essential to the success of the event.

In addition, Virginia's eight accredited law schools and a number of its leading law firms again contributed to the Section's annual operating budget. On behalf of the Section, the Board of Governors again offers its heartfelt thanks to all of our law schools and the following law firms for their generous support: Edmunds & Williams, PC; Gentry Locke Rakes & Moore LLP; Rees, Broome & Diaz, PC; and Troutman Sanders LLP.

The Board also wishes to express its sincere thanks to three outgoing members for their diligent and excellent service. Those members are William G. Broaddus, Esquire, Eric R. Thiessen, Esquire, and Bruce C. Stockburger, Esquire.

This report would not be complete if it did not include one major disappointment, the failure of our proposal for a statutory amendment, to allow admission of full time law school professors as active members of the State Bar, at the State Bar Council. At a series of meetings between October 2005 and March 2006, the Board of Governors discussed, debated and ultimately endorsed a proposal to request an amendment to Virginia Code § 54.1-3931. The proposed amendment would have authorized the Supreme Court to provide by rule that law professors in Virginia who have been admitted to practice in another state may be admitted (without examination) to active membership in the Virginia State Bar. (The statute provides only for associate membership, except that any attorney who has been admitted to practice law in another state or territory or the District of Columbia for at least five years may be admitted to the Virginia State Bar.) At its meeting on October 27, 2006, the State Bar Council rejected the Section's proposal by a vote of 38-13.

George Somerville served as Chair of the Section's Nominating Committee, whose members included the Hon. Martin Bass, a member of the Board; Blair Mitchell, Esquire (Warren County Attorney); Sharon Eimer, Esquire (Public Defender, Lynchburg); James E. Brydges, Jr., Esquire (Walker & Taylor); Robert Ballou, Esquire (Johnson Ayers & Matthews); and Professor Margaret Bacigal (University of Richmond). The Committee nominated the following slate of officers and governors, which was elected by acclamation by the board of governors: Professor Henry L. Chambers, Jr., Chair; Lawrence H. Hoover,

Jr., Vice-Chair; Winston S. ("Sid") Moore, Secretary; and the Hon. Rossie D. Alston, Jr. (Prince William Circuit Court), Professor Paul Thompson (University of Richmond), John D. Sharer, Esquire (Dominion Resources Services, Inc.), Frank K. Friedman, Esquire (Woods Rogers PLC), and John H. Foote, Esquire (Walsh, Colucci, Lubeley, Emrich & Walsh, P.C.), new and returning members of the Board of Governors.

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