

JUSTICE IS THE FIRMEST PILLAR OF GOOD



The YLD Review

The State Bar of Georgia — Working for the Profession and the Public

Volume 45 , Issue 2

Young Lawyers Division

Winter 2003

Go DAWGS!

Fall YLD Meeting Gets Off to a Good Start With Georgia Victory

Over the crisp fall weekend of Oct. 3 - 4 the Young Lawyers Division descended upon Athens, Ga. for their Fall 2003 meeting. The legendary match up between the University of Georgia and the University of Alabama was the backdrop for two days of networking, socializing and YLD business.

The meeting kicked off on Friday night with a cocktail party and dinner at the Foundry Inn ballroom. After dinner some attendees gathered in the hospitality suite to socialize and watch the Atlanta Braves playoff game, while others made their way over to Broad Street to enjoy the scene that is downtown Athens on a game weekend.

Following an efficient business meeting on Saturday morning, attendees made their way over to campus to tailgate as only the YLD can. The young lawyers gathered under a white tent near the library and law school and enjoyed the open bar and extensive spread of food. They were joined by Bar president Bill Barwick and his wife Donna Barwick, as well as representatives from sponsoring organizations Legalink and Esquire Deposition Services.

Shortly before kick-off everyone made their way to Sanford Stadium to watch the Dawgs roll over the Tide. After the game the young lawyers and their guests enjoyed a final night in Athens. 🍷



(Left to right) Rich Connelly, Andrew Jones, Chuck Auslander and Josh Bell talk with other YLD members prior to the start of the game. See page 7 for more photos.

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from the
President

Don't Miss the YLD Spring Cruise

by Andrew W. Jones

I am very excited about this year's spring meeting (April 16-19, 2004), which will take place on a Royal Caribbean cruise ship with a destination of Nassau, Paradise Island and CocoCay in the Bahamas, and encourage all YLD members to participate.

Registration is \$350 per person, based on double occupancy, and includes:

- Oceanview stateroom
- All food and beverages (including alcohol), with a Saturday evening black tie (optional) dinner
- Business meeting
- Port charges, taxes

This price is guaranteed for the first 100 people to sign up. You are responsible for transportation to and from Miami, where the ship departs.

Specific details will follow after registration. For airfare information, call airlines directly, or the travel agency planning the cruise, Travel Planners International, at 770-984-2504 or 800-253-7070.

We hope to see you there! ☺

Attendee Information

Name _____

Nickname _____

Bar Number _____

Address _____

First YLD Meeting? _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone No. _____ Fax No. _____

Email Address _____

Area of Practice _____

Spouse/Guest Name _____



Meeting Registration

Number of Cruise Packages at \$350 _____ Optional Cancellation Insurance at \$29 _____

Please make checks payable to: State Bar of Georgia, or include the following credit card information:

Type of card: Visa Master Card

Name on Card: _____

Card Number: _____ Expiration Date: _____

Total Amount: _____ Signature _____

Please mail or fax to Deidra F. Sanderson, YLD Director, State Bar of Georgia, 104 Marietta Street, Suite 100, Atlanta, GA 30303. If you have questions, please call 404-527-8778. Fax: 404-527-8717.

The Litigation Committee Addresses Area of Interest to Civil Litigators

With almost sixty members, the Litigation Committee is charged with addressing the special areas of interest to lawyers who are civil litigators. We are looking forward to an exciting and productive year, which will conclude in April 2004 with the annual Civil Litigation for Younger Lawyers Seminar. Last April, more than sixty people attended the seminar and enjoyed presentations and trial practice tips from numerous trial lawyers and judges such as Judge Alvin T. Wong of the State Court of DeKalb County; Judge Alan Blackburn of the Court of Appeals of Georgia; Judge Steve C. Jones of the Superior Court of the Western Judicial Circuit, Athens; and Judge Craig T. Schwall of the Magistrate Court of Fulton County.

This year, in addition to the annual seminar, the committee has planned a series of three luncheons for Georgia's young lawyers. Each of the lunches includes a speaker on a civil litigation-related topic

and entitles attendees to one CLE credit hour for \$5.00. The lunch is free thanks to our sponsor, LegaLink, which provides court reporting, legal videography, and trial services throughout the country. The first luncheon will be held Dec. 4 at the State Bar's offices in Atlanta. The speaker is Dennis Cathey of Cathey & Strain in Cornelia. Cathey is a tremendous speaker and well-respected trial lawyer. The topic of his presentation will be, "Depositions - Tricks of the Trade." Local judges are invited to attend and contribute any thoughts they might have on the topic being discussed. The dates for future lunches will be announced soon.

Should you have any questions concerning when and where these lunches will take place, when and where the committee's monthly meetings will take place, or should you wish to join the Litigation Committee, please contact Joe Hession at (404) 888-4156, or by e-mail at jhession@hunton.com. ☺

Special thanks to the following sponsors for their support of the State Bar of Georgia

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Meeting the Most Critical Legal Needs

The Georgia Legal Services Program, Inc.

By Phyllis J. Holmen

Recent legal needs studies indicate that 40 to 60 percent of moderate and low-income Americans have a new legal problem every year. With almost 1,000,000 Georgians at or below the poverty line, this means that 400,000 or more have legal needs each year.

With demand far outstripping supply, the lawyers and paralegals at Georgia Legal Services Program choose carefully which problems to solve, and which clients to accept. Each year, the Board of Directors of GLSP establishes case acceptance priorities to address the most critical problems identified through local needs assessments by GLSP's regional offices. For 2003, GLSP staff accept critical cases that involve supporting families, preserving homes, maintaining economic stability, achieving safety, stability, and health, and assisting clients with special vulnerabilities, such as the elderly, persons with disabilities, the institutionalized, and those who cannot speak English.

GLSP also establishes partnerships to strengthen its efforts, offer clients other resources, and achieve maximum community benefit. GLSP works with the State Bar of Georgia, the Atlanta Legal Aid Society, domestic violence task forces, tenants' organizations, law schools, and a host of other organizations around the state on initiatives to improve delivery of legal services, develop more holistic approaches to clients' problems, and take other steps in pursuit of justice for all.

The critical problems of Georgians with low incomes have not changed significantly in GLSP's 32 years, though the legal issues, the strategies, and the remedies have evolved. Problems such as family disputes, consumer fraud, government errors, denial of health care benefits and more still plague the poor.

These actual case stories of people with critical legal problems illustrate the impact of GLSP's efforts to focus its resources strategically to provide access to justice and opportunities out of poverty for low-income Georgians.

A Home of Their Own

Georgia's affordable housing crisis makes achieving the American Dream of home ownership virtually impossible for many low-income families. The lack of new affordable housing in Georgia has spurred the boom in manufactured housing as a realistic option for families of modest means, helping to make Georgia the nation's second largest producer of these dwellings. The boom in manufactured housing has generated many new legal issues for low-income Georgians.

Last year, when the owners of the Garden Springs Mobile Home Park in Athens sold the park to developers, hundreds of low-income families, many of whom had lived in the park for

decades, were in danger of becoming homeless. A team of GLSP lawyers in Athens and Gainesville, ten lawyers from the Atlanta law firm of Sutherland, Asbill & Brennan, LLP, and social work and law school students from the University of Georgia negotiated relocation terms with the developers, raised \$200,000 to support relocation expenses, and are helping with the purchase of an 18-acre tract for a new mobile home park site. GLSP has assisted more than 50 families that have stayed together as a group to form a resident-owned and managed manufactured housing cooperative the residents have named, "People of Hope Cooperative, Inc."

Children at Risk



A GLSP lawyer provided the legal aid Troy needed to reinstate Medicaid coverage for his life-saving medication.

Residents of the rural communities served by GLSP often suffer from low wages and a lack of health care benefits because of the high cost of insurance. A sick child and a missed day at work almost certainly mean lost pay for those who can least afford it. It can mean losing a job. In low-income working families, 22 percent of children lack health insurance and only about 40 percent of parents receive paid sick leave, according to the 2002 Kids Count Data Book published by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. For uninsured, low-income families, obtaining appropriate medical care for a child suffering from a terminal illness or a child needing surgery can sometimes require help from a lawyer.

Troy was born with a terminal illness five years ago. Due to the day-to-day care he requires, his mother is unable to hold a full-time job. Troy's father lives in another state and has no contact with his son. Troy's world came crashing down when Medicaid would no longer cover his medication, which costs \$1,000 per month. Troy's father held an insurance policy which required his mother to pay 100 percent of the prescription costs out-of-pocket and seek reimbursement. Troy's father refused to cooperate and stated that

he wanted the child to die. A GLSP lawyer unearthed special Medicaid regulations allowing waiver of the primary insurer requirements in situations like this one, and Troy's Medicaid coverage was reinstated. Troy is enjoying his childhood and is enrolled in school.

Parental Cries for Help



Between 3.3 and 10 million children each year witness acts of violence against a parent, usually their mother, committed by the other parent or an intimate partner. (Attorney General Jane Brady, Delaware, 2002.)

The road to family success, regardless of a family's income level, is more challenging today than ever. Family violence has become an issue of growing national concern. According to the Georgia Department of Human Resources 2002 Fact Sheet, one in four women in the nation reports that at some point in their lives a husband or significant other physically abused them. Many of GLSP's clients are survivors of family violence. Many have urgent legal problems that impact the well-being and security of their children.

Ms. Burns and her baby daughter, Denise lived in fear. With Denise looking on, her father shot Ms. Burns five times at close range over visitation rights. Denise's father was convicted and is serving time in jail. Ms. Burns believed that upon his release, he would come after her to kill her. Seeking safety, she and her daughter moved to Georgia. To retaliate, Denise's father sued Ms. Burns for defamation in California where the crime occurred. A GLSP lawyer assisted Ms. Burns in petitioning the court for a name change for herself and her daughter, obtained a court order preventing Ms. Burns from having to publish notice of her name change, referred the defamation case to Legal Services in California, and obtained a pro bono attorney in California who assisted Ms. Burns in getting the defamation case dismissed. Ms. Burns and Denise are now able to start new lives.

Continued on page 4



Relief From Shoddy Home Repairs

Georgia's population of seniors aged 60 and older is expected to increase 53 percent by 2010 according to the Georgia Department of Human Resources 2002 Fact Sheet. Many of the elderly are easy victims of fraud, scams and other predators. Seniors seek legal advice on a variety of consumer problems. Sometimes it's the result of an unexpected financial hardship. Other cases include housing repairs and medical bills.



The legal aid provided by GLSP enabled Ms. Mitchell's home to be properly repaired and rid of health hazards.

Ms. Mitchell is elderly and suffers from a physical disability. She desperately needed home repairs to eliminate eight health hazards, and she requested assistance from the United States Department of Agriculture's Rural Housing Service (RHS). She received a Section 504 home improvement grant and a loan to cover the home repair costs. Although RHS paid the contractor when he left, Ms. Mitchell complained to GLSP that the work was not complete and that most of the completed work was inadequate. A GLSP lawyer got RHS to reinspect the work, which led to additional grant funds for Ms. Mitchell to complete the work and to repair the contractor's substandard work.

These stories illustrate how GLSP lawyers work to help clients solve critical problems related to housing, domestic disputes, medical

care and more. In every case, lives were dramatically impacted by timely legal help. Most cases are resolved without recourse to the courts. Individuals who can't be offered legal representation are offered advice or brief service, or sometimes written information about their legal problem. Many clients are referred to other resources and GLSP partners, including local bar associations and private attorneys, United Way and other social service agencies, the Housing Helpline at (800) 369-4706, and the new statewide website at www.legalaid-ga.org. By strategically targeting its limited resources to the most critical legal needs, GLSP works to solve the most important problems and help clients get back on their feet. The State Bar's Campaign for GLSP is critically important to help increase the number of clients who can be helped. 



THE FOLLOWING SCHOOLS HAVE REQUESTED ASSISTANCE IN LOCATING ADDITIONAL ATTORNEY COACHES FOR THEIR MOCK TRIAL TEAM. PLEASE CONTACT THE TEACHER COACH LISTED TO VOLUNTEER YOUR SERVICES BY DECEMBER 12, IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN COACHING A TEAM THIS SEASON AND HAVEN'T ALREADY BEEN ASSIGNED TO A TEAM. THANK YOU!

Berkmar High School, Lilburn,
Loretta Mirandola, TC 770/921-3636
Bradwell Institute, Hinesville, Off.
James Snider, TC 912/876-6121
Brookwood High School, Snellville,
Kenneth Kirk, TC 770/978-5099
Eagle's Landing High School, McDonough,
Jamie Bullington, TC 770/954-9515
Fannin County High School, Blue Ridge,
Amy Payne, TC 706/632-2081
Fayette County High School, Fayetteville,
Beverly Kelly, TC 770/460-3540
Frederick Douglass High School, Atlanta,
Natalie Everett-Jones, TC 404/792-5925
Harrison High School, Kennesaw,
Randy Lynn, TC, 678/594-8104
Johnson High School, Gainesville,
Ann Brunk, TC 770/536-2394

Kennesaw Mountain High School,
Leila Rees, TC 678/594-8190
Lovejoy High School, Lovejoy,
Brad Weiser, TC 770/473-2920
Martin Luther King, Jr. High School, Lithonia,
Karyn Williams, TC 678/874-5511
Parkview High School, Lilburn,
Pam Marsingill, TC 770/921-2874
Salem High School, Conyers,
Charla Cebulski, TC 770/929-0176
Southeast Whitfield High School, Dalton,
Glenda Kessler, TC 706/226-2753
Southwest Magnet High School, Macon,
Ira Davis, TC 478/784-5466
Tri-Cities High School, East Point,
Kris Hale, TC 404/669-8200
Booker T. Washington High School, Atlanta,
Ava Delaney-Lawrence, TC 404/752-0728

YOU CAN MAKE A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN YOUR AREA BY SERVING AS A MENTOR TO A MOCK TRIAL TEAM!!

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the mock trial office.
404/527-8779 or 800/334-6865 (ext. 779) or mocktrial@gabar.org.

Thanks for your interest in this great academic program!

GeorgiaAdvocates.org

A New Web Site for Pro Bono Attorneys and Legal Service Organizations

Atlanta Legal Aid Society, Georgia Legal Services Program and the Pro Bono Project of the State Bar of Georgia have launched a new Web site for pro bono attorneys and legal services organizations: GeorgiaAdvocates.org.

Tracey Roberts, project manager for the Web site project, explained the organizations' vision for the project. "The main goal of the web site is to make it easier for attorneys to provide pro bono help by providing training materials and improving outreach and communication tools for all of the pro bono programs and the legal service organizations across the state," Roberts explained. "We are collaborating with the Young Lawyers Division Pro Bono Committee and all of the legal service organizations and pro bono projects in Georgia to share our strengths and to provide one-stop shopping for any volunteer who would like to do any form of pro bono work in the state."

The web site contains the following resources:

- Law Library – a library with continuing legal education materials in the areas of civil procedure/evidence/trial skills, ethics and professionalism, AIDS/ HIV/terminal illness, family law and domestic violence, community economic development, consumer law and bankruptcy, criminal law, health law, housing, immigration law, public benefits, unemployment, seniors, wills and estates, and military and veterans' affairs.
- Calendar – for private firms, legal aid organizations and pro bono programs to post information about attorney training programs, fundraising events and other activities.
- News Page – for private firms, legal services organizations, community education clinics and pro bono programs to post news items and share information about developments in various areas of poverty law with pro bono attorneys and poverty law advocates.
- Roster – listing pro bono attorneys and programs throughout the state.
- Listserv – to allow legal services organizations, community education clinics and

pro bono programs to solicit pro bono help from members of the roster based on their location and identified interest in specific areas of law.

Ryan Schneider and Tonya Boga, co-chairs for the YLD Pro Bono Committee, will help promote the site in various ways to young lawyers, both generally through Pro Bono Committee mailings, and specifically to those who attend the semi-annual Bridge the Gap Program at which the Pro Bono Committee will have a booth. "Bridge the Gap is a great opportunity for pro bono recruiting because attendance is mandatory for newly admitted attorneys, and there are lots of young lawyers looking for client responsibility and trial experience," Schneider explained. "The Web site will provide these new attorneys with the tools they need to get up to speed in various areas of the law. This is a great resource for them in their practice generally as well as in representing low-income clients."

Atlanta Legal Aid and Georgia Legal Services will be working with the State Bar to control access to the Web site in order to prevent unauthorized practice of law. Access to various sections of the Web site is password protected. Mike Monahan, the director of the Pro Bono Project of the State Bar of Georgia, explained that legal services advocates and potential pro bono attorneys had to "join" the Web site by filling out certain information online. "The Georgia Online Justice Community has certain membership requirements. You have to be a law school graduate and a member of the State Bar of Georgia in good standing. Supervised law students working for a law school clinic program and practicing under the third-year practice rule are also eligible to become members," Monahan explained. "We ask that everyone signing up for access to the Web site pledge to do an average of 50 hours of pro bono service per year. We would also like for you to report your pro bono activity to the State Bar of Georgia Pro Bono Project when you pay your bar dues in March. We may set up an online survey to collect pro bono activity information over time."

For more information about GeorgiaAdvocates.org contact Tracey Roberts at (404) 614-3934 or tracey_m_roberts@yahoo.com. 

Free Video About Educational Rights of Children with Disabilities

By: Sara Davis

Parents face many challenges raising and educating their children. For a parent of a child with special needs, ensuring that their child receives a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment possible can be a struggle. Many find the process of trying to get help for their child frustrating and confusing. The Advocates for Students With Disabilities Committee of the State Bar of Georgia Young Lawyers Division is offering a video that can help parents concerned about their special needs child's education.

The video, entitled "Let's Make Education Special," outlines important steps parents can take to protect their child's education, including little

things — like keeping copies of written correspondence and sometimes taping meetings with school officials — that can make a big difference in the long run. The video also provides details about the child's legal rights and offers information on valuable resources that may be able to help defend those rights.

The video, currently available in VHS format, is produced in English and Spanish with subtitles. The first copy of it is available to you or your organization FREE of charge by contacting Deidra Sanderson at: (404) 527-8700 or (800) 334-6865 or returning the coupon below. Additional copies maybe purchased for \$5.00 each shipping and han-

dling included. So, if you have or know a child with special needs who is not receiving the attention they need at school, order a copy today!

The Advocates for Students with Disabilities Committee works to ensure students with disabilities receive the educational support they are entitled to. If you are interested in becoming a member of this committee please contact Leslie Lipson at leslie@thegao.org or Marc D'Antonio at mdantonio@glsp.org. The committee invites anyone interested in joining to attend its next meeting which will be held Thursday, Jan. 8, 2004 at 12:15 p.m. at the offices of the State Bar of Georgia.

Detach and return the coupon below. 

_____ Please send me a **free** copy of *Let's Make Education Special*.

_____ I would also like to order ___ additional copies at \$ **5.00** each. I have enclosed a check or money order made payable to: State Bar of Georgia - YLD for \$ _____ to cover the cost of the additional videos.

Please mail the video to:

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

Return this coupon to: Deidra Sanderson, YLD Director
State Bar of Georgia
104 Marietta Street N.W., Suite 100
Atlanta, GA 30303.



That's Not a Water Hazard — That's the Putting Green

Even though the weather resembled a scene from *Caddyshack* (causing us to halt play halfway through the day), the 6th Annual Law Related Education Golf Tournament was held on Monday, Sept. 22, 2003, at The Oaks Course in Covington, Georgia. Organized by the YLD Law Related Education Committee of the State Bar of Georgia, the tournament raised over \$13,500 to support the efforts of the Law Related Education Consortium, which is primarily a grant funded non-profit organization and has little, if any, carryover from year to year. In a down economy, when so many other worthy charities are suffering from budget shortfalls, we are incredibly grateful and truly awed by the generosity and support we received this year from all of our sponsors, players and the Georgia legal community at large, and we offer all of you our most sincere and heartfelt thanks for making this year's Golf Tournament an unprecedented success.

People always ask me why I am such a big proponent of LRE, and why our committee works so hard to make this tournament successful. I tell them that LRE is a proven way of improving our nation, one person at a time. Law-Related Education (or "LRE") is an interactive method of teaching young people and adults about the law and the fundamental principles on which it is based. LRE teaches people about their legal rights and responsibilities and encourages informed participation in our democratic form of government.

National and state studies show that LRE deters delinquency and reduces disciplinary problems in young people because it fosters the development of decision-making, problem solving, and conflict management skills. For both young people and adults, LRE helps to develop a sense of empowerment through learning that people count and individuals can make a difference.

The Georgia Law Related Education Consortium is an association of institutions, agencies, organizations and individuals who believe LRE is an essential element in the development of people as productive, law-abiding citizens. Its mission is to promote the inclusion of LRE curriculum in schools and in community-based programs all across the state.

The consortium adopts a "train the trainer" approach, conducting 10 to 12 teacher/trainer workshops on an annual basis. The consortium also prepares materials for all grade/age levels, including *An Introduction to Law in Georgia* (now in its third edition and presently being translated into Spanish to teach Latino adults their rights and responsibilities under Georgia law). The consortium's materials have also been used by several YLD committees that work with at-risk children, including the Kids and Justice Committee, the Aspiring Youth Committee and the Law Related Education Committee.

The tournament is successful because of the generous sponsorship of several law firms, individuals and businesses who donate money, prizes,



Despite the wet weather, Derek White, Andrew Jones, Chuck Hodges and Joe Dent were all smiles prior to the start of the 6th Annual Law Related Education Golf Tournament at The Oaks Course in Covington, Georgia.

and refreshments, and because of the players who come out every year to support the tournament and the efforts of the Consortium. The LRE Committee extends its heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you! (Because the tournament was called due to rain and lightning, there was no "official" tournament champion this year — so we invite ALL of our players (and everyone else) to come back next year to fight it out on the greens for all of the fame and glory associated with being the LRE Golf Champion Team!) See you next October! 🏆



Ben Barrett and another golfer watch as Amanda Farahany drains a putt.

The Entertainment and Sports Law Section Wants You!

We invite you to join our 400 members for fantastic educational and networking opportunities!

As a member, you:

- Are invited to our monthly hot-topic CLE luncheons and annual half day and three-day seminars.
- Are invited to our social events, to network with professionals and potential clients.
- Receive discounts on selected CLE registration fees.
- Will receive our quarterly newsletters.
- Will stay up to date with current topics and trends in television, film, music, visual arts, theater and the Internet as well as professional sports.
- Contribute to legal assistance and education for artists through our work with the Georgia Lawyers for the Arts.

Upcoming events include:

- Holiday Party in December with Georgia Lawyers for the Arts.
- Jan. 16, 2004, 11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.: Hot topic, "The Music Industry in Desperate Times: Business and Legal Realities, c. 2004," with speaker Bertis Downs, UGA Entertainment Law Professor and Attorney for R.E.M., Colony Square, Atlanta.
- Feb. 6, 2004: Annual Half Day Entertainment Law Seminar, featuring the following topics: Digital Downloads, Entertainment Case Law Update, Trademark Law Update, Ethics and Professionalism; panel speakers and further details TBA.
- April 2004: Section Social Event; Artist Showcase and Mixer with Law Students.
- May 7, 2004: "Licensing for Television and Film" with speaker James McGee, The Turner Broadcasting Company Legal Department, assigned to the Cartoon Network.

For more information or to join the section, contact Johanna Merrill at (404) 527-8774 or johanna@gabar.org.





Caroline and Bart Reed.



ABOVE — Johanna Merrill, Deidra Sanderson, Debbie McCune, Jeff Ingram and Doug Kertscher.



Cale Conley, Andrew Jones and Jon Pope.



LEFT — A guest poses with Tim Chandler, Tasha Olivi and Stephen Lowry.

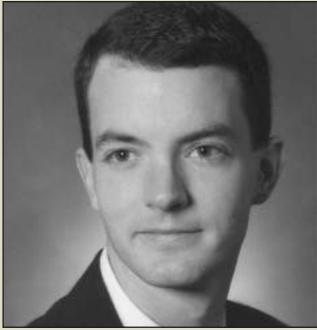


Blaine Norris; Deana and Josh Bell; and Chuck and Cathy Auslander.



Rob Register, Deidra Sanderson, Brie Houston and Jon Pope.





from the
Editor

The Habit of Respectfulness

By Bryan D. Scott

Treating people with respect and worth should be a core value of a younger attorney's practice. Putting that practice into place early on in your career will be a blessing to you and to others around you. Just like anything in life, the more you practice it, the more natural it will become. Three groups of people stand out to me to whom we can apply the principle of respectfulness.

Fellow Attorneys

Camaraderie exists among attorneys. Recently I attended a CLE, and the two primary speakers were a worker's compensation plaintiff's attorney and a worker's compensation defense attorney. Throughout the seminar, they joked with one another, exhibiting a great relationship, despite the fact they compete head-to-head inside and outside of the courtroom.

Respect those attorneys with whom you deal, no matter how difficult that may be at times. That respectfulness, in turn, will earn you the respect of others in our profession. Your reputation in the legal community is built in part upon how respectful you are to others in our profession.

Your Clients

Two ways that you can show respect for your clients is by zealously representing them in their affairs and by treating their interests as valuable. Your zealous representation of your client may demand extra time commitments, covering that possible, but not probable, avenue that may benefit your client, or seeing the representation through even when you have a permissible reason to drop the case.

You can treat clients' interests as valuable by returning phone calls. You should keep them informed as the status

of their affairs progress. Be honest and forthright with your clients, painful as it may be (to you or them). In the words of a fellow attorney with whom I once practiced: "The truth is your friend."

Everybody Else

We should take the time to speak to people about the issues that concern them, whether at Christmas parties, social events, church, family get-togethers, or the like. If you desire to leave work at work (which I think is a good policy), then cordially and genuinely say, "Why don't you call me at the office tomorrow and we can talk about this further?"

Sometimes it is harder to be respectful of people with whom you do not have a relationship, but true respect does not discriminate. In other words, take the same time to listen to a person who calls you at the office, even if you know you probably will not be taking his or her case. Acknowledge to them that this must be a difficult matter with which to deal (which it probably is, otherwise they would not be calling you). Then determine what direction you should politely lead them, whether it be an avenue to pursue, a referral to another attorney, etc.

Is there an attorney or client with whom you are dealing that you can be more respectful toward? Is respectfulness to everyone a habit of your heart? When everything in you screams, "don't be respectful to this person," purpose in your heart that you will take a deep breath, be patient, and show that person respect, because every person, like yourself, has dignity, value and worth. 

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