The Akron Law Alumni Association and the Stark County Bar Association present their 6th Annual Event

Law, Love & Chocolate

February 4, 2016

Limited VIP Reception w/ loft tours
Celebrity Chocolatiers
Live Entertainment
Hors d’oeuvres
Chocolate Delicacies
Champagne Welcome
Wine Raffle/Auctions
Limited Horse-drawn Carriage Rides
Photo Booth
Complementary Valet or Covered Parking

5:00 - 8:00 p.m.
The Historic Onesto
Downtown Canton

Proceeds to benefit
Pegasus Farm

Tickets on Sale January 4, 2016
See inside for details!

Photograph by David Dingwell, Esq.
Design by Lisa M. Williams
Notice
The Bar Office e-mail addresses:
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Visit us at www.StarkCtyBar.com

THE BAR JOURNAL
Official Publication of the Stark County Bar Association
FOUNDED IN 1900
Suite 400, Courtyard Centre
116 Cleveland Ave., N.W. • Canton, Ohio 44702
Hon. C. Roland Centrone, Bar President
Tina McCort, Executive Director & Editor
Donna Wilson, Executive Secretary & Editor
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2016 CLE Seminars
Jan. 29, 2016 2016 Criminal Law Seminar
- SCBA Conference Room
See Pg. 6
Feb. 11, 2016 OVI Update Video Seminar
- SCBA Conference Room
See Pg. 7
Mar. 9, 2016 2016 Municipal Court Seminar
- SCBA Conference Room
Details in next issue.
Mar. 17, 2016 Professionalism, Law Office Management and
Client Funds Management Video Seminar
- SCBA Conference Room
New Lawyer Training & CLE Credits!
Details in next issue.
Apr. 6, 2016 2016 Family Law Seminar
- The Canton Club Event Center
Apr. 8, 2016 20th Annual White-Williams
Bankruptcy Institute
- Hartville Kitchen
Reminder: M - Z!
Complete your CLE by Dec. 31, 2016

Elder Law Committee Meeting
Tuesday, January 12, 2016 • 11:45 AM
SCBA Conference Room
Jennifer Lile, Esq. and Sue Sokolowski, Esq. will be
speaking on “Recent Developments in Ohio Elder Law.”

Did You Know?
As a member of the Stark County Bar Association you may
request for your review our Annual Budget or our Statement of
Assets, Liabilities and Net Assets. These financial documents
are available upon request made to Tina McCort, our
Executive Director.

The Bar Journal is published monthly for all bar
members. Free to members, $20.00 per year to others.

All communications and editorial material should be
directed to the Bar Association office by the fifteenth
day of the month preceding publication.

Opinions and positions expressed in the signed material are
those of the author and may not necessarily reflect those
of the Stark County Bar Association, its officers, staff or
board of editors.
I love the legislature. What a fascinating group of individuals. I really took notice of “legislative logic” a number of years ago when there was a ground swell of opinion to raise the driving age from 16. As teenage traffic deaths mounted (and this was before the advent of the cell phone), civil leaders, the Dept. of Public Safety, parental groups, law enforcement agencies and the like, clamored to raise the driving age. A 16 year old, they thought, was not mature enough to drive a car.

Upon hearing the public outcry, the legislature sprang into action. Commissions were formed, studies were done, public appearances were made, hearings were held. After months of debate, they finally reached a decision. I remember watching the news on TV and seeing the legislators patting themselves on the back, smiles all around. A decision that crossed party lines was reached. You could almost see white smoke emanating from the top of the State House.

The driving age was reduced to fifteen and a half (15 ½). I was stunned. Then I heard the legislative logic. The parent must ride with the kids until they reach sixteen. Therefore, you will have a more experienced (but not more mature), 16 year old behind the wheel. Good idea. Problem solved. Why not lower the driving age to 12 and have a super experienced 16 year old driver?

Legislators these days think they can solve any problem by passing a new law. Each new law must have a name. It’s easier to take credit for it on the campaign trail. Thus, we have Annie’s Law, Megan’s Law, Hooper’s Law, etc, etc. Each was a legislative attempt to stop a horrible tragedy from recurring. Some are better than others, but most cost a lot of money, affect a lot of innocent lives and were only marginally effective.

I have a formula for how these laws are made:

\[ \text{UT} = \text{KJR} \quad (\text{Unfortunate Tragedy} = \text{Knee Jerk Reaction}) \]

Here is how it works. Little Sha comma on the top (Sh’) was kidnapped by her deranged aunt. Her body was cut up into little pieces with a filet knife and fed to her hamsters. A horrible tragedy! The public was outraged! The legislature rallied around Sh’s family and promised to pass a law so this could never happen again!

After much thought and discussion, the legislators came up with three possible solutions.

Legislative Solution #1: Require registration and background checks of all people purchasing filet knives. Require each person to submit a “certificate of sanity” prior to purchase.

Legislative Solution #2: Require the manufacturers of filet knives to dull the blades to roughly that of a butter knife. Then Sh’ couldn’t have been cut up.

Legislative Solution #3: Declare hamsters to be dangerous, exotic animals. Require lots and lots of insurance, along with expensive permits to own or harbor hamsters.

Solution number three was quickly enacted by unanimous vote. It is a win, win. Extra campaign contributions from the insurance industry and extra money for the State and/or County. Sh’ Law in effect. Problem solved! Next!

Happy New Year everyone! Hopefully, this is the year a million dollar case walks in your door.
Thank you!!  
Christmas Giving Tree Program

Many thanks to those of you who participated in this year's Christmas Giving Tree Program.

We were thrilled with our memberships response, knowing the holidays were made a little brighter for a child, adult, and senior citizen through your efforts.

Thank you for your support.

Refuge of Hope

Thank you SCBA members for your generosity this Holiday Season in donating hats, scarves, gloves, and socks to the Refuge of Hope Men's Shelter. The Community Involvement Committee was able to collect several large bags and boxes of items and personally delivered them to the shelter where they are currently housing many men and children. Refuge of Hope was extremely grateful and expressed how much the items were needed. Based upon the wonderful response of the SCBA members and the success of this year's drive, the Community Involvement Committee hopes to hold this event annually. Again, thank you to all that participated!

Nicole Richard and Lisa Williams—Co-Chairs

Save The Date

The Stark County Bar Association Holiday Party was such a success that we have scheduled it for next year. Please save Friday, December 2, 2016 in your calendar and in your law firm’s calendar. You won’t want to miss it!!
February 4, 2016
5-8 p.m. at The Historic Onesto

Celebrity Chocolatiers
Akron School of Law Dean Matthew Wilson; Akron Alumni Association Board Members;
SCBA President–Hon. C. Roland Centrone; Hon. Robert Lavery; Hon. Craig Baldwin;
Hon. Sheila Farmer; Hon. Scott Gwin; Hon. Kristin Farmer; Hon. Frank Forchione;
Hon. Chryssa Hartnett; Hon. Rosemarie Hall; Hon. Mary Falvey;
Hon. John Poulos; Hon. Curt Werren; Mag. Natalie Haupt; Mag. Lori Flowers;
Mag. Amanda Paar; Mag. Ali Frantz; Mag. Jacquelyn Huntley; Mag. David Nist;
and various sponsor organization representatives

Host: Hon. Taryn Heath     Honorary Chairperson: Lee Plakas, Esq.

Proceeds to benefit Pegasus Farm Equestrian Center (501(c)3)

Live Entertainment         Hors d’oeuvres       Chocolate Delicacies
Champagne Welcome          Wine Raffle/Auctions Photo Booth
Horse-drawn Carriage Rides (limited) Complimentary Valet or Covered Parking

Your reservations are requested before January 26, 2016
Please list the names of those in your party:    Number Attending __________

Pre-Sale Tickets: $55.00/person $100/couple   After January 26, 2016  $65.00/person $120/couple
Limited VIP Event 4:30 -5:30 p.m. open bar/ loft tours (extra $35/person)

___ I cannot attend, please accept the enclosed donation payable to Pegasus Farm *tax deductable

ALL RESERVATIONS MUST BE PAID IN ADVANCE TO SECURE YOUR RESERVATION
Make checks payable to Stark County Bar Association
116 Cleveland Avenue, N.W., Suite 400, Canton, Ohio 44702

Register: By Mail-Coupon, SCBA Office 330-453-0685 for main event and VIP tickets
or register online: www.starkctybar.com
Wine Bottle Donations
For the 6th Annual Law, Love & Chocolate Event

The Stark County Bar Association will be holding its annual Law, Love & Chocolate fundraising event on February 4, 2016, at The Historic Onesto. Money raised from this event will be used to benefit Pegasus Farm here in our local community. We are in the process of collecting fabulous bottles of wine for the wine raffle and we are requesting your assistance in making the Law, Love & Chocolate Event another success.

If any members or firms are interested in making a wine donation, please contact Attorney Melissa Pitinii via telephone at 330-458-2411, or e-mail at mvpitinii@yahoo.com at your earliest convenience. Thank you in advance for supporting the Stark County Bar Association as we continue to contribute to local organizations.

Have You Renewed?
The Value of SCBA Membership!

CLE Seminars ................................................................. $360 Annual Savings
  • Reduced Rates for Members! (12 hrs/yr.)
  • Annual Savings can Exceed Dues

Stark County Bar Journal ........................................... $20.00 Value
  • FREE to Members

Mailing Labels ............................................................ $60.00 Value
  • Member and Non-member labels in alphabetical or zip code order.

Conference Room ....................................................... Up to a $60.00 Value
  • Members may use a conference room once a month at no charge.

Lawyer Referral Service ............................................ Grow Your Practice
  • Client Referrals

Public Speaking Opportunities .................................. Great Value

Member Committees .................................................. Substantive & Service Oriented

Networking & Congeniality ....................................... Professional & Social Events

Professional Growth .................................................. PRICELESS!

Associate Membership

Associate membership is available to paralegals, legal administrators, law students, and law school graduates who are not admitted to the Bar. The Bar Association urges all who employ anyone in this capacity to encourage them to join the Association and become active in our committees and programs related to their fields.

Any associate member in good standing shall be entitled to the rights of membership except that an associate member may not hold office, vote, evaluate judges or judicial candidates, or serve on the following committees: Personnel Committee, Grievance Committee, Disputed Fee Committee, Unauthorized Practice of Law Committee, Nominating Committee, Judiciary Committee, Professional Continuity Committee, Bar Applicants Committee, Finance Committee, Notary Public Committee, and Executive Committee.

Becoming an Associate Member requires that you be sponsored by a regular member of the Association, excluding law students.

With the exception of law students, who shall not be required to pay dues, all other associate members shall be responsible for paying the yearly dues as designated by the Executive Committee of this Bar Association.

Please call the Bar Association at 330-453-0685 for more information.
The Ohio Court of Appeals Fifth District

The Court is pleased to announce it will begin using video conferencing for selected oral arguments. The project was funded by a technology grant from the Supreme Court of Ohio. It is not intended to replace all in-person oral arguments but rather to be used occasionally to expedite cases as deemed necessary by the Court and to limit travel in bad weather.

Video Conferencing sites have been established in Newark, Delaware, and Canton. If a case is scheduled to be heard by video conferencing, the Order setting the hearing will indicate where the litigants are to appear and that video conferencing technology will be used.

The Court’s website, www.fifthdist.org, has more information. However, if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the Court.

Public Notice


Please visit our website at www.ca6.uscourts.gov for detailed notice.

Legal Notice

The Multi-County Juvenile Attention System (MCJAS) is accepting sealed proposals from qualified proposers to provide legal counsel services. Request for Proposal (RFP) packets are available Friday, December 11, 2015, at the Central Office of the Multi-County Juvenile Attention System (MCJAS), located at 815 Faircrest Street SW, Canton, Ohio, 44706.

Proposals are due Monday, January 11, 2016 at 10:00 A.M. Proposals should be addressed to David C. Riker and returned to the Central Office of the Multi-County Juvenile Attention System. For questions about the RFP, please contact David C. Riker at (330) 484-6741, ext. 2817. The Multi-County Juvenile Attention System reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive minor irregularities and informalities in the selection process.

A New Year…A New Commitment

Welcome to 2016. We hope it is a fantastic year filled with joy, happiness and all good things. We here at Community Legal Aid are grateful for the continued support and assistance of not only the Stark County Bar Association, but its members. Your willingness to support us by giving of your time to volunteer makes a huge impact in the lives of Stark County’s low income population. If not for your kindness, many would go without.

So as a new year begins, we hope that you continue to give of your time and expertise. To those who have not yet volunteered, we hope you would consider joining us. The staff in the Volunteer Legal Services Program are always here to answer questions, provide support and welcome newbies with open arms. Whether you are looking for a commitment that is limited in time and scope, or are able to volunteer more extensively, all are welcome as we have numerous opportunities available. We would absolutely love to hear from you. Please feel free to call or email us 330-983-2634 or cboyle@communitylegalaid.org.

To those volunteers who assisted us in December…Thank-you!!!

SAND&SEBOLT
Practicing exclusively in PATENT, TRADEMARK, COPYRIGHT LAW, & RELATED LITIGATION
4940 Munson St. NW, Suite 1100 330.244.1174 Canton, Ohio 44718 www.sandandsebolt.com
2016 Criminal Law Seminar
Friday, January 29, 2016 • SCBA Conference Room

8:30 A.M.  REGISTRATION – Coffee & Doughnuts

9:00 A.M.  THE STATUS OF THE CRIMINAL GANGS IN STARK COUNTY
Detective Mike Volpe, Canton Police Department

10:00 A.M.  PRESERVING AND PROTECTING THE CRIMINAL RECORD
The Honorable Craig R. Baldwin, Fifth District Court of Appeals
Kathleen O. Tatarsky, Esq., Former Assistant Prosecuting Attorney
Office of John D. Ferrero, Stark County Prosecuting Attorney
Amy Andrews Sabino, Esq., Judicial Staff Attorney, Fifth District Court of Appeals

11:00 A.M.  BREAK

11:15 A.M.  JUDGES’ ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION: SPECIALIZED COURT PROGRAMS
(HOPE, Mental Health Intervention in Lieu, CHANCE (Drug Court), Re-Entry,
Honor Court and Domestic Violence Court)

The Honorable John G. Haas
The Honorable Frank G. Forchione
The Honorable Kristin G. Farmer
Stark County Court of Common Pleas, General Division

12:15 P.M.  ADJOURN

2016 Criminal Law Seminar

*Members: $90.00  Associate Members: $75.00  Non-Members: $165.00

Name ___________________________________________ Atty. Reg. No. __________________

Address __________________________________________

*PLEASE NOTE: If you are currently a member of any local bar association, you may attend at our members’ price.

Please mail checks to: Stark County Bar Association
116 Cleveland Avenue, N.W., Suite 400, Canton, Ohio  44702-1728

NO REFUNDS UNLESS RESERVATION CANCELLATION IS RECEIVED 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF SEMINAR.
Application has been made for 3.00 General CLE Credit Hours.
Stark County Bar Association

OVI Update Video Seminar

Thursday, February 11, 2016 — SCBA Conference Room

8:00 A.M.  REGISTRATION – Coffee & Doughnuts

8:30 A.M.  CASE LAW AND LEGISLATIVE UPDATE
Dennis Evans, Esq., Connor, Evans & Hafenstein, LLP, Columbus

9:30 A.M.  THE EVERYDAY EXPERT
Robert Beck, Jr., Esq., Franklin County Public Defender’s Office, Columbus

10:00 A.M.  BREAK

10:15 A.M.  CHANGES IN THE 2013 NHTSA MANUALS
Daniel J. Sabol, Esq., Luftman, Heck & Associates, LLP, Columbus

10:45 A.M.  WHY THERE IS NO MAGIC MOTION
Cleve M. Johnson, Esq., Law Office of Cleve M. Johnson, Columbus

11:15 A.M.  SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND PROFESSIONAL LICENSES
Elizabeth Y. Collis, Esq., Collis Law Group, LLC, Columbus

11:45 A.M.  LUNCH (on your own)

12:45 P.M.  THE SURPRISING IMPLICATIONS OF MISSOURI VS. MCNEELY
Terrance Rudes, Esq., Port Clinton

1:15 P.M.  HOW TO GET INTOXILYZER 8000 TESTS EXCLUDED
Andrew Bucher, Esq., Balyeat, Leahy, Daley & Miller, LLC, Lima

1:45 P.M.  ARE OHIO’S OVI MARIJUANA LAWS CONSTITUTIONAL?
Shawn Dominy, Esq., Columbus

2:15 P.M.  BREAK

2:30 P.M.  DOING A DAUBERT HEARING ON DRE’S
Dawn Steele, Esq., Franklin County Public Defender’s Office, Columbus
Leon Sinoff, Esq., Franklin County Public Defender’s Office, Columbus

3:00 P.M.  MONEY MAKING AND KEEPING OUT OF TROUBLE
Jessica D’Varga, Esq., The Law Offices of Saia and Piatt, Inc., Columbus

3:30 P.M.  THE FUTURE OF BREATH TESTING
D. Timothy Huey, Esq., Columbus

4:00 P.M.  ADJOURN

*Members: $180.00     Associate Members: $150.00     Non-Members: $330.00

Name ____________________________  Atty. Reg. No. _______________________

Address____________________________________________________________________

*PLEASE NOTE: If you are currently a member of any local bar association, you may attend at our members’ price.

Please mail checks to: Stark County Bar Association
116 Cleveland Avenue, N.W., Suite 400, Canton, Ohio  44702-1728

NO REFUNDS UNLESS RESERVATION CANCELLATION IS RECEIVED 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF SEMINAR.

Application has been approved for 6.00 CLE Credit Hours.
New Members

Timothy P. Bogner, Esquire
601 South Main St.
North Canton, Ohio 44720
PH: 330-493-1570
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E-Mail: tbogner@mgplaborlaw.com
Pre-Law: Emporia State University
Law School: University of Kansas
Admitted to Practice: 2015
Associated with: Macala & Piatt, LLC

Kallen Dearnbarger, Esquire
815 Superior Ave., East
Cleveland, Ohio 44114
E-Mail: kld@smithmarshall.com
Pre-Law: Mercyhurst University
Law School: The University of Akron School of Law
Admitted to Practice: 2015
Associated with: Smith Marshall, LLP

Lauren Gribble, Esquire
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Pre-Law: Hillsdale College
Law School: The University of Akron School of Law
Admitted to Practice: 2015
Associated with: Tzangas Plakas Mannos Ltd.

Daniel John Hampu, Esquire
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Law School: The University of Akron School of Law
Admitted to Practice: 2015

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Law School: The University of Akron School of Law
Admitted to Practice: 2015
Associated with: Milligan Pusateri Co., LPA

Kim Mason, Esquire
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Canton, Ohio 44702
PH: 330-430-6304
E-Mail: kimberly.mason@pnc.com
Pre-Law: Miami University of Ohio
Law School: Toledo Law School
Admitted to Practice: 1990
Associated with: PNC Bank

Sara W. Verespej, Esquire
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FAX: 330-994-1823
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Pre-Law: University of Michigan
Law School: Case Western Reserve University School of Law
Admitted to Practice: 2009
Associated with: Associated Estates Realty Corp.

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Law School: The University of Akron School of Law
Admitted to Practice: 2015
Associated with: Tzangas Plakas Mannos Ltd.

Move Recently?
We want to know where you are! E-mail Donna at Donna@StarkCtyBar.com with all change of RESIDENCE and BUSINESS address information.
Changes of Address

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PH:  330-455-9218 Ext. 444
E-Mail:  sreed@patriotsoftware.com

The law firm of Zollinger, Gruber, Thomas & Co. has changed their name to Gruber, Thomas & Company. The address and phone number remain the same.

Jason N. Bing – jbing@gruberthomas.com
Michael S. Gruber – mgrub@gruberthomas.com
Todd B. Kotler – tkotl@gruberthomas.com
David M. Thomas – dthomas@mckinley-title.com
Jamie Wittensoldner – jwitt@gruberthomas.com

Florida & Ohio Trust and Estate Matters
Layman, D’Atri & Associates, LLC
(330) 493-8833
BRIAN C. LAYMAN*, JD, CPA, M.TAX
ADMITTED TO PRACTICE LAW IN OHIO & FLORIDA
Available to co-counsel or consult on:
• Ohio & Florida Probate and Trust Administration
• Federal and Ohio Estate and Gift Tax Returns
• Estate and Asset Protection Planning for High Net Worth Individuals
• Will Contests and Fiduciary Litigation
*Certified as a Specialist in Estate Planning, Trust & Probate Law
By the Ohio State Bar Association

Would You Like Additional Clients?
Join Our Lawyer Referral Service

Why not consider your Stark County Bar Association’s Lawyer Referral Service? We will refer clients to you who need your expertise. Attorneys are currently needed for our LAWYER REFERRAL SERVICE for all areas of law.

Social Security Disability
Is My FOCUS
Refer With Confidence
JEFFREY H. WELTMAN, ESQ.
Phone 330.498.9820  Fax 330.244.1173

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*Employment Law
*Consumer Law
*Divorce Law
*Estate Law
*Criminal Law
*Foreclosure Law
*Real Estate Law
Why did you join the Stark County Bar Association?
I joined to meet other young lawyers, and become more active in the legal community.

What practice areas interest you the most? Health Care, Labor and Employment, Employee Benefits

Who are some of your heroes in the legal profession? Abraham Lincoln is my hero because of his strong character, leadership and honesty.

What was your most rewarding experience during law school?
Helping the individuals who came to the Certificate of Qualification for Employment (CQE) Clinic. The CQE can remove certain barriers to employment for people who have committed felonies or misdemeanors and find it difficult to get a government issued occupational license or employment in general.

What groups or activities are you involved in outside of work?
I assist with the children’s program at my Church, Fohl Memorial United Methodist Church. I also love to kayak on the Tuscarawas River and at Atwood Lake.

What motto will shape/has shaped your legal career?
If it's worth doing, it's worth doing right.

What is your favorite legally-related movie or book? Liar Liar

Are you a Stark County native? Yes

Why did you decide to remain in or come back to Stark County to practice law?
It's my home and I love it here.
What social cause(s) are you passionate about?
I am passionate about kids and families, and about keeping Stark County strong so that my kids will want to stay or return here to raise their own families.

How does this (volunteer activity) impact your career and practice?
My career has influenced my volunteer activities more than the other way around. Working in Family Court we see so many families struggling with poverty, mental health and substance abuse issues. After 20 years in criminal justice I believe the best way to prevent crime is to give people a purpose, a sense of belonging, a good education, and hope for a future.

Did this passion guide you in (some related volunteer activity)?
Yes, I’ve volunteered for the Viking Victory Run 5k and Fun Run, since it began in 2012. The 5th annual race will take place April 17, 2016 and this is my first year as Co-Director and Fundraising Chairperson. It’s a lot of work, but well worth it. The money we raise goes to the North Canton School PTOs to provide technology, playground equipment, audiology, reading or educational programs, supplies and building enhancements that directly benefit our students.

I volunteer when I can with Girl Scouts and St. Paul’s church. Over the years I’ve also made quilts to raise money for Camp Tippecanoe, Camp Wakonda, Camp Kesem, North Canton Schools and other organizations. Summer camp was a big part of my childhood. I love being able to continue the tradition with my own kids and share it with other kids who could not otherwise afford summer camp. For the past four years I’ve mentored a new lawyer through the Supreme Court’s Lawyer to Lawyer mentoring program.

What have you learned as a result of being involved in (volunteer activity)?
It’s very easy to overlook the people behind the scenes, to think things just take care of themselves, or to say, “I’m too busy to volunteer.” Without volunteers, non-profits would not exist and community events would not happen.

What advice would you give others wishing to be involved in the community?
You can bring your kids with you to volunteer at school, church, shopping and wrapping for community Christmas events, etc., even when they’re small. They may grumble about it as they get older, but eventually they’ll find their own causes to be passionate about. They’ll volunteer on their own and feel the same pride and purpose you do.

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Alternatives to Traditional Lawyering: Navigating New Opportunities in the Sharing Economy

Language, like the law, is a constantly evolving reflection of our cultural trends and attitudes, so it’s no surprise that the term “sharing economy” officially entered the English lexicon earlier this year after it was adopted into Oxford’s online modern usage dictionary.1 Referring to the rise of microentrepreneurship and the radical shift in how goods, information, and services are consumed, the sharing economy model has been embraced as an alternative (or supplement) to traditional employment by individuals hailing from a variety of professional backgrounds.

Several recent surveys have concluded that about 20 to 30 percent of the US workforce currently earns at least some income through various forms of self-employment.2 Among attorneys in particular, freelance activity has increased by over 50 percent in at least 10 states since 2009, spurred in part by lopsided law school graduate to legal job opportunity ratios. (Ohio’s ratio in 2013 was roughly 3:1, for example).3 Cloud computing and other mobile technologies have also increased the feasibility and attractiveness of telecommuting on the freelance market.4 This article will explore the variety of ways and reasons why attorneys are engaging in the sharing economy to customize, grow, and take charge of their legal careers.

Mixed Motivations

In some cases, temporary, contract-based legal work is a necessity when new attorneys enter a scarce job market or seasoned attorneys find themselves between jobs, but many individuals are voluntarily leaving firms and/or accepting freelance work on the side for a number of other reasons:

• the safety net of a second income in uncertain times
• the ability to develop a niche practice area
• the freedom to steer clear of difficult clients
• the desire to focus on the intellectual side of the law
• the need for greater work/life balance (particularly for par-ents, caregivers, rural lawyers, and military spouse attorneys)6

Existing Models of Independence

Just as varied are the options individuals have when it comes to establishing themselves in the freelance legal market. Attorneys can still go the “old-fashioned” route and find hourly contract work through a third party—especially since firms are increasingly advertising their outsourced positions online rather than with local staffing agencies, often making allowances for telecommuting. However, these opportunities are usually limited to basic clerical tasks, like document review and appearances.7

A newer development is the rise of lawyers’ networks that connect lawyers and firms with carefully vetted freelance attorneys who go on to remotely assist with more highly specialized legal assignments. This option is particularly attractive because the network handles all the marketing in exchange for a small commission of their affiliate attorneys’ earnings, lifting a huge burden off individuals who would otherwise have to spend time marketing themselves.8

Building a solo freelance practice certainly isn’t impossible, but it usually takes years of relentless marketing and networking.9 Attorneys that specialize in niche practice areas, however, have found success in marketing themselves as consultants to other attorneys and providing legal advice seminars to the public.10

Freelance Finances

No matter the scale or duration of an attorney’s freelance endeavors, complying with liability insurance and tax requirements is a must. Developing a financial plan that takes health care and retirement costs into account, especially for those pursuing full-time freelance status, will also pay off in the long run.11 Finally, strong contract agreements that define compensation, dispute resolution, and work-product ownership provide an extra layer of financial protection.12

Footnotes

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