



# THE CHRONICLE

THE INSTITUTE OF CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION IN GEORGIA

VOLUME 2 • NUMBER 1

## Bridging the Future... For the Next Generation



Fresh out of law school, equipped with learning skills and information derived from countless hours of reading, note-taking, analyzing cases and perhaps some clinic experience, a young lawyer crosses the threshold. With degree in hand and Bar exam passed, ideals and commitment for the future swelling inside, the young lawyer steps into the practice of law.

This big step is a challenge that every practicing attorney must meet. Some beginning lawyers have the benefit of an experienced lawyer there to guide them. They have the opportunity to ask questions and gain insights from a long-practicing professional. On the other hand, some new lawyers are left to rely on what they learned in the classroom and on trial and error as they assume the responsibilities of attorneys and counselors at law.

Fortunately, something is being done to forge a closer link between law school and the practice of law. The State Bar of Georgia, the Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism, and ICLE are conducting a statewide Transition into Practice Pilot Project to test the feasibility of a mentorship program for newly admitted members of the State Bar. Funded by the State Bar, the Georgia Bar Foundation, the Commission, ICLE, and grants from private sources, the project recognizes that the State Bar and its individual members have a professional obligation to assist beginning lawyers in acquiring the practical skills, seasoned judgment, and sensitivity to ethical and professional values necessary to practice law in a highly competent manner to serve the needs of the public.

Although the State Bar of Georgia through ICLE offers a program called "Bridge the Gap" required of newly admitted attorneys, this program includes only a twelve-hour curriculum. It does not afford a new lawyer one-on-one contact with a seasoned lawyer. With this in mind, in 1996 then Bar President Ben Easterlin appointed a Committee on the Standards of the Profession charged with investigating whether the State Bar should require a period of internship or other supervised work prior to admission to membership in the State Bar. Chaired by John T. Marshall, partner at *Powell, Goldstein Frazer & Murphy LLP* in Atlanta, the committee studied internship, apprenticeship, and courses for newly admitted lawyers in other states. Attempting to use the most effective features of these and to avoid the attendant problems, the committee recommended mentorship integrated with an extensive curriculum component. The program would allow a new lawyer to be paired in a learning relationship with a more experienced Georgia lawyer. Marshall said that the goal is to help new lawyers become competent practitioners through assisting them in the extremely formative period right after law school. The combination of mentoring with intense skills and values education is the dynamic aspect of this project:

(1) **Mentorship**

Every beginning lawyer would be provided with access to meaningful counsel and professional guidance from an experienced lawyer (mentor) during the first two years after admission to the bar.

(2) **Curriculum component**

Every beginning lawyer would be required to complete practical skills and values training courses during the first two years after starting to practice. These courses will replace the current Bridge-the-Gap program and mandatory litigation experience requirements, and will constitute the sole CLE requirement for beginning lawyers during the first two years of practice.

See Marshall Page 4

**"I think everyone agrees there needs to be some type of program to help young attorneys."**

-- John Marshall, *Powell, Goldstein, Frazer & Murphy, LLP*

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# Where Your Registration Fee Goes

-- by Stephen J. Harper

I.C.L.E., as the Continuing Legal Education provider for the State Bar, works with all of the sections of the State Bar to co-sponsor the best possible programs for our fellow Georgia attorneys. The idea for this article came to me during a planning session of the Executive Board of the Family Law Section of the State Bar of Georgia. I was explaining a particular registration fee for one of their programs to the members, when several of them said that they had no idea of the kinds of things that impact upon the cost of our seminars. They suggested that we share this information with all Georgia attorneys. So, here is a simple, I hope, explanation.

A seminar registration fee is the result of various influencing factors. We collect \$3 per CLE hour as part of your registration fee and pass that amount on to the Commission on Continuing Lawyer Competency of the State Bar of Georgia. This amounts to \$18 per attendee for a six-hour program. If there is a professionalism credit within the seminar, we collect another \$15 per attendee for the Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism.

Each year every active Georgia attorney probably gets over fifty individual envelopes containing I.C.L.E. seminar brochures. You may take these mailings for granted, but there are about 23,000 attorneys in the state, and each must receive a brochure in order to have the opportunity to attend all seminars and institutes that are relevant to his or her practice. If you attribute this expense only to attorneys who come to a particular program, the cost of announcing our seminars represents about \$20 per program attendee. Although we have an I.C.L.E. Web Site on the Internet ([www.iclega.org](http://www.iclega.org)) which contains information about our schedule and individual programs, it will not be a viable substitute for brochures to announce our programs until the great majority of Georgia attorneys use it regularly. So, we will continue to use the reliable U.S. Postal Service to keep you informed.

Almost all of our program materials are printed here at the Institute. They have been recognized by attorneys across the state as great reference resources. When I last asked for the information, the average length of our "books" was about 400 pages. At a favorable in-house printing rate, the cost of an average seminar "book" is about \$25.

The effort that goes into presenting each seminar involves more than making sure the written materials are of the highest quality. I.C.L.E. asks hundreds of Georgia attorneys and many from other states to make presentations as seminar and institute faculty members. Frequently, in order to bring you national experts, a seminar or institute may have out-of-state speakers. I.C.L.E. will pay their travel and lodging expenses as required. This usually claims about \$10 per traveler of each attendee's registration fee. We are grateful that all Georgia attorneys on our faculty, and many of our out-of-state faculty, appear without being reimbursed for their time and travel. You can see that without their contributions our registration fees would be much higher.

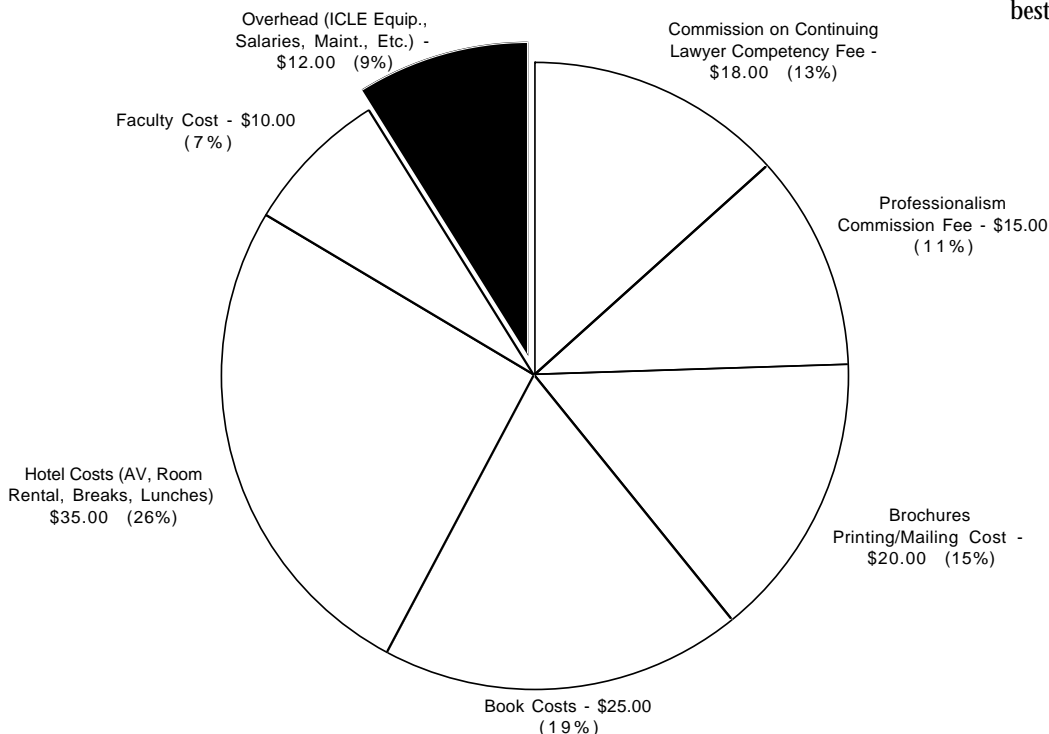
When you consider that our registration fee for the kind of seminar I have described is about \$135.00 and you account for the expenses I have discussed so far, hotel related costs such as room rental, audio-visual equipment, lunches and refreshments take a huge chunk of the remaining \$47 balance of each registration fee. We try to keep our site expenses down to \$35 per attendee, but, as hospitality industry prices increase, we often exceed this amount despite our

best efforts. Now you see why I.C.L.E. is a not-for-profit, educational institution.

I could go on, but the point I am trying to make is that we are striving to provide each of you with the very best continuing legal education seminars and institutes at the lowest possible per program fee. The fact that we are holding the line is confirmed when we talk with other organizations like I.C.L.E. In fact, I recently received a brochure for a seminar in another southern state. The registration fee is \$145.00 and the seminar does not have a professionalism cost, there are no out-of-state speakers and lunch is not included.

After reading this article, I hope you will agree that you are getting a satisfactory "bang for your CLE buck." We at I.C.L.E. thank each of you who attend our programs for your confidence in the Institute. We will continue to work harder to deserve it.

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**Total Registration Fee: \$135**

# ICLE from the Inside...



Watercolor Painting  
by Martha Phillips

## Martha Phillips

### Assistant to the Executive Director

Growing up in Elberton, Georgia with nine brothers and sisters in many ways has helped Martha Phillips in her job as the Assistant to the Executive Director of the Institute of Continuing Legal Education. She is accustomed to a large, close knit family and interacting with many different personalities.

"Since I've been here almost 15 years, I feel I have grown with the people in the office," Phillips said. "I certainly consider them part of my extended family. Most importantly, I think the close working relationship helps the staff of ICLE work to produce top quality service."

Phillips' main function is to "make sure things get done." She does everything from scheduling building maintenance to mailing out brochures to overseeing personnel. Phillips said the wide range of responsibilities that her job entails keeps things new and exciting for her. "I'm never doing the same thing at any one time," she said. "I am constantly dropping one thing and picking up the next and that keeps things from becoming too routine."

Some seminars require Phillips to go out of town and assist with registration, distribution of course materials, fine tuning any last minute details and generally helping things run smoothly. She said she likes the occasional travel, and it is one of the aspects she enjoys most about her job.

Another component of Phillips' job requires her to oversee other office staff. "I feel this is one of the most important parts of my job," she said. "As a supervisor, it is vital to be able to adjust yourself to each personality and develop a working relationship with an individual, so everyone can do the best job possible." The constant commitment to quality from herself and the entire ICLE staff is what goes into each course presented.

Outside of the office, Phillips has a variety of activities. She is a mother to two grown sons, and she enjoys writing poetry and painting. She has been painting since 1965. Her paintings appear on small notecards that she most often gives to friends and colleagues. She has also donated some of her paintings to help raise money for charities. Phillips said she also likes to enroll in continuing art education courses because it's important to stay brushed up on her skills and techniques. Just as the art courses Phillips takes teaches her something new and informative, she said she knows ICLE is providing the same type of service to Georgia attorneys.

"In the future, ICLE's goal is to remain at the forefront of continuing legal education, by using innovative technology to deliver the best programs available to Georgia attorneys."

-- by Renita Q. Ward

## Renita Ward

### Student Editor

Renita, a senior journalism major at the University of Georgia, is the new student editor of the *ChronICLE*. She has written for several campus publications, including the Red & Black, Impact '99, and the New Faculty Tour Guide. Renita enjoys reading and writing in her spare time, and admits she also surfs the web. She plans to attend graduate school.

# THE CHRONICLE

Editor ..... Brian E. Davis

Student Editor ..... Renita Q. Ward

Supervising Attorney ..... Stephen J. Harper

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# Casual Dress — Are You Serious?

For several years, employees and managers have talked about “dressing for success.” The term became popular with the publication of a book by that title. Ultimately, author John Molloy wrote sequels and spin-offs, repeating the phrase in various ways.

Walk into any attorney’s office, and you’ll get an impression of the attorneys and staff members before anybody says a word—by noticing what they are wearing. Clothing communicates.

Surely we’re all aware of how “successful dress” customs have changed. Pull out college yearbooks from the 1950s and 1960s. Flip to the sports section. You’ll see that spectators at football games wore their finest apparel—hats and heels for women, coats and ties (and sometimes hats) for men.

Or remember when you started flying commercially? You’d adorn yourself with the best suit, the most expensive dress. Maybe you bought new clothes for the flight.

Compare those customs with today’s. Attend a warm-weather football game, and many of the fans are wearing shorts and visors. As you board a flight, the only ties you’ll see are on the pilots. Passengers headed for a beach vacation won’t have to change clothes upon landing.

As a reflection of these changes in recreational style, the workplace allows “business casual dress.” However, definitions remain vague. What may seem casual to an employee could look sloppy to the employer, co-workers, and customers. To end the confusion, every workplace needs a specific list of what’s condoned, and what isn’t.

Last year I directed a workshop for secretaries, receptionists, and administrative assistants, sponsored by ICLE in Georgia. When we discussed acceptable attire, one woman said: “I’ve been in the work force for thirty-one years. I’ve watched the styles move from suits to slacks to shorts. I thought I could get used to the new atmosphere, but I can’t. So I’m going to leave my job, and find one where managers respect traditional style and grooming.”

Another woman said her husband had ended his job search by signing up with a company where the standard of professional dress seems quite high. He rejected a bigger salary offer from another company—because he thought that firm’s informal dress code symbolized a half-hearted work ethic.

I liked this comment from a participant: “Don’t dress for the job you have now,” she advised “Dress for the job you want next.”

Several workshop participants said that dressing in nice outfits makes them feel more serious about their work.

One of my former teaching colleagues at the University of Georgia, Dr. Leathers, now deceased, chose a novel way to impress his student about the impact of clothing. “I walked into one of my classes dressed in a bathrobe and tennis shoes,” he reported. “I was wearing sunglasses and smoking a long, black cigar.” He began his remarks by asserting that “appearance communicates meaning.” Not surprisingly, the students who had grown accustomed to seeing him in more professional attire “became rather disoriented.”

Apparently, despite our cries for relaxed dress codes, *we aren’t accepting business casual very casually.*

(Adapted from: *The Complete Communicator: Change Your Communication, Change Your Life!* Bill Lampton, Ph.D., Hillsboro Press.)

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## Marshall from Page 1

During the first year, the basic curriculum will focus on topics such as Client Relations, Counseling, Negotiations, ADR, Law Practice Management, Legal Ethics, and Professionalism. For example, in the course on Client Relations, matters such as communication skills, oral and written, the recognition and resolution of conflicts of interest, proper use of escrow accounts, and billing will be taught. In the second year, beginning lawyers will be encouraged to select courses in such practice areas as Litigation (Civil or Criminal), Business Practice, Real Estate Practice, Family Law, Trusts and Probate Law.

“I think everyone agrees on the need for a program to help young attorneys,” Marshall said. “I have heard no dissent on that point. The main purpose of this pilot program is to determine what will work.”

Authorized by the Supreme Court of Georgia and the Board of Governors of the State Bar, the Pilot Project will include 150 newly admitted lawyers and an appropriate number of mentors. The Standards of the Profession Committee, representing a broad cross-section of the practicing bar and the organized bar as well as the law schools, is directing the project.

The Pilot Project spans four years. Work on the program began in 1997 with preliminary research, securing funding, and garnering support from the legal community. The actual phase where new attorneys are paired with seasoned lawyers is one year away.

A number of questions must be answered before it can be determined whether this program will be useful for beginning lawyers throughout the state. In the Pilot Program, the Standards Committee is in the process of selecting a test group of mentors and beginning lawyers. One of the most important goals in this selection process is to make sure that the test pool is completely diverse, with regard to areas of law, geography, race and gender.

Several other areas being worked on are developing CLE courses and determining CLE credit. Since the program would replace “Bridge the Gap,” both mentors and new attorneys will receive CLE credit for the curriculum components of the program. Ideally, the mentorship will turn into a lasting relationship between the mentor and mentee. Through the process of continual teaching, learning, and guidance, the relationship will assist the new lawyer with practical skills and professional challenges.

“The central feature of this program is to help beginning attorneys,” Marshall said. “That means translating classroom exposure into problems of actual law practice by addressing issues such as relationships with clients, the judiciary, and colleagues.”

Evaluating the results of the pilot program will allow the committee members to decide what works best. Of course, in the end, the goal is to continue legal education by assisting the transition from law school to law practice in a way that equips each beginning lawyer to discharge competently his or her professional obligations.

-- by Renita Q. Ward