



PRESS RELEASE

Contact:

Judy Bond-McKissack
Executive Director
Judy.Mckissack@cletn.com

Bill Calhoun
Associate Director
Bill.Calhoun@cletn.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TN Commission on CLE & Specialization
221 Fourth Avenue North, # 300
Nashville, TN 37219
615-741-3096
www.cletn.com

Continuing Legal Education Commission to Launch Mentoring Program for Beginning Lawyers

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – In an effort to provide beginning lawyers with access to more resources and to encourage seasoned attorneys to take new lawyers under their wings, the organization that runs Tennessee’s continuing legal education program has established a new formal mentoring program.

The program will pair attorneys with less than three years of experience with those that are more established in the practice of law. Both attorneys will get continuing legal education (CLE) credit for their efforts.

A critical element of the program is the participation of sponsoring organizations, which will develop mentoring plans, assign mentors and oversee progress. The Tennessee Commission on Continuing Legal Education and Specialization, which is in the process of launching the program, is looking to local bar associations, law schools and professional organizations to develop local programs as sponsoring organizations.

“We are excited to be able to provide new lawyers assistance as they transition into the practice of law,” said Judy Bond-McKissack, Executive Director of Continuing Legal Education. “We are looking for leaders in the legal community to step up and become our initial class of mentors.”

The addition of mentoring as a means to achieve CLE credits was approved by the Tennessee Supreme Court when it recently amended Rule 21 and authorized the Commission to establish and administer such a program. This mentoring program is the result of years of development by the Commission. The program will initially run from July 1, 2013 until December 31, 2014.

Sponsoring organizations should be prepared to develop a mentoring program that outlines the duties and responsibilities of the mentor and lawyer, provides training as needed, prepares evaluations and maintain communication with the Commission.

In May, training for the first class of mentors will be offered in Memphis. Trainings are being scheduled in Nashville, Knoxville and Chattanooga. Training will provide nine hours of CLE credit and be in a combined format with both distance learning and live elements. The training, which is based on market

research conducted by the Commission, will incorporate results of studies on law student well being as well as the challenges of transitioning from law school to the practice of law.

This summer, Tennessee lawyers within three years of the start of their practice will be able to participate in the formal mentoring program with approved sponsoring organizations.

Law schools, bar associations, professional organizations and others interested in participating as a sponsoring organization can contact the Tennessee Commission on Continuing Legal Education and Specialization at Teresa.Seibert@cletn.com or at info@cletn.com. Attorneys interested in participating in the program as a mentor should contact the Commission at info@cletn.com.

Information will be forthcoming about how beginning attorneys can join the program this summer.

About the CLE Commission: The Commission on Continuing Legal Education and Specialization operates under Supreme Court Rule 21 and monitors CLE requirements and administers the specialization program for attorneys. The director and staff also serve the Tennessee Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection. The commission members are appointed by the Supreme Court.

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