

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE



By Michael J. Dennin

SPRING FORWARD

Our CCBA is ready for the spring season. It is the time of year when we escape from the winter doldrums. Plants start coming back to life. The weather gets a bit warmer. You smell the fresh air and thawing ground. We even pick up another hour of light!

Are you looking to grow? Yes? Then grow with us at the Bar Association. We are constantly growing and breathing life into our legal community. Let us discuss some recent highlights of our growth. First, we are beginning our roll out of a highly anticipated and touted Reduced Fee Lawyer Referral Program (RF-LRP) for our municipal court practitioners. This is only the start of our new program. The Reduced Fee LRS is in actuality a legal representation access program. This program has been implemented in North Jersey in Morris and Sussex County and is very successful. We have had a couple of meetings now with Jennifer Vuotto and John Paul Valez from the Morris County Bar Association to learn about the program. The program's aim is to assist people who need legal representation but who may not be able to afford a lawyer. We have set forth fee structures depending on the area of the law that is needed and depending on the amount of work that is required in a particular case. For instance, in Municipal Court people who cannot afford lawyers often apply for a public defender, however they may not qualify for a public defender based on their income. They also may not be able to afford to hire a private lawyer on

their own. Thus, they can be stuck in limbo. This program fills the space in between. While we are starting out with the Municipal Court program, our goal is to expand the program to other areas of law. This is a win, win, win. It is a win for the public because it provides access to legal service they can afford (they must meet income requirements). It is a win for practitioners because it gives attorneys the opportunity to gain business at a reasonable rate. It is a win for the CCBA because it allows us to help facilitate fair and reasonable access to attorneys for those who cannot afford regular rates. We thank the Municipal Court Committee for jumping on board to help us launch this initiative. You may have heard that there is a push for more public access to legal services. We believe that the people who should be giving legal advice and providing legal services should be lawyers. If we start allowing non-lawyers to provide legal advice and services, this can cause a myriad of problems. We are, as the CCBA, trying to meet the demand for reasonable legal services with legal representation from actual lawyers. We will be needing help in various areas of the law when this gets further rolled out. Please be on the lookout for more information in the coming weeks and please reach out to us so you can help.

We have many upcoming events and CLEs. Our CCBA works VERY HARD organizing events, giving thoughtful CLE presentations, and refining our internal processes. Our Board is always working hard to make the CCBA better. We have a wonderful board of attorneys who provide

their time, free of charge, to attend meetings and events. Our CCBA staff works hard all day, every day, to ensure everything is done properly, timely, and professionally. We are proud to say that our Board, and our membership, is continuing to grow, no matter the season. Our Young Lawyers are the best in the state IMHO (that's text-speak for "in my humble opinion"). We had a sold-out Chili Cook-Off in February. Our YLC puts their heart (and time and money) into the events to help make a difference. The money from the Cook-Off goes to Veterans Haven, which is a place that helps our veterans with various problems find work, get counseling, eat a meal, sleep in a bed, and transition back into society. We have the Hon. Peter J. Devine, Jr. Award Reception coming up on March 9. This year's award is being presented to Hon. Francine I. Axelrad and Barry W. Rosenberg, Esq. The festivities get underway at 6 p.m. at Caffe Aldo Lamberti in Cherry Hill. Our Foundation is holding their spring event and fundraiser on Friday, March 27 with a new twist on an old favorite! The Beer, Bubbles & Bourbon tasting event is sure to delight all palates with a wide variety of sparkling wine, beer and over 40 whiskies and food selections. Many CLE seminars fill our schedule in March as well.

Please come out and grow with us this Spring. We value you as a member of YOUR Association. Only you can decide to come out and help make a difference in other people's lives. Make that decision, sign up and come to an event and be a part of something much greater than yourself.

BEER
Bubbles
Bourbon
& BASKETS

We need donations of items or baskets for the silent auction that will take place during the Beer, Bubbles & Bourbon tasting event on March 27. Items can be gift cards to local salons, stores or restaurants, or cool items picked up at a local store, etc., or get creative and make a theme basket! All donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by IRS regulations. Contact Kara Edens at kee@camdencountybar.org to arrange for a donation today. If you have a specific store, restaurant, golf course, or salon you frequent, ask them for a donation. Most stores are more than happy to help when you tell them what it's for - the Camden County Bar Foundation and our upcoming Children's Picnic and high school scholarship awards.

THANK YOU!

ATTORNEY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

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The Camden County Bar Association is pleased to partner with the New Jersey State Bar Association for a special free legal advice day clinic on **Wednesday, March 25 from 6 - 8 p.m. at KIPP Cooper Norcross Academy, 525 Clinton Avenue in Camden.**

Attorneys are needed to provide free, brief legal consultations to community members with questions about immigration, guardianship, landlord-tenant, divorce, domestic violence restraining orders, criminal law/expungements, victim's rights, and more. To volunteer, email askthenjsba@njsba.com and include the area of law that you are volunteering for.