



Message from the Chair

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the Family Law E-Newsletter! I am very excited about launching this new endeavor. We all hope that you enjoy it and find it useful and informative. Things have been very busy since the Annual Meeting two months ago, so I wanted to update you on what's going on in the Section.

The tax CLE teleconference was a huge success. We had almost 300 people on the call. Many thanks again to Mel Frumkes and Marjorie O'Connell for their hard work. If you missed the teleconference, you can still order the materials. The next teleconference is scheduled for December 9 and will be on ethical issues in presenting and preparing your case for trial. **Save the date! More details will be sent to you soon.**

At the end of the Annual Meeting, new ABA President Dennis Archer announced the formation of a new "working group on protecting the rights of service members" that will examine the legal needs of U.S. service members in light of the quickly-changing face of the U.S. military. This working group will function under the auspices of the ABA Standing Committee on Legal Assistance to Military Personnel (LAMP). Dennis Archer asked our section to participate in this working group and for me to appoint two representatives. Obviously, family law is an area greatly impacted by the mobilization of troops. Patricia Apy has already been serving as a member of LAMP and working very hard on that Standing Committee. I have appointed Trish and Mark Sullivan as our two representatives.

At the Annual Meeting, Justice Kennedy gave the address at the Opening Assembly. At that time, he specifically addressed the severe problems resulting from mandatory, minimum sentences for non-violent crimes and he called upon the ABA to look into solutions to this problem. President Archer asked if we would participate in a new commission he was appointing in response to Justice Kennedy's request. He recognized families are heavily impacted by mandatory minimum sentences. I have agreed to serve on this Commission.

The officers just returned from the Section Officers' Conference held in Chicago. This is a conference held each year for all of the officers from all of the sections to come together, with ABA leadership, to discuss many issues of concern to all of the sections and to share ideas. All of the officers came away with many new ideas of how to make our section even better.

We have begun a major outreach to the Young Lawyers Division. We will be attending their fall conference in Pittsburgh next weekend. Their theme this year is "One Lawyer, One Child." We plan to work with them on guardian ad litem training as well as training on our newly adopted Standards for Representing Children in Custody Cases. And speaking of the Standards, they were adopted by the House of Delegates at the Annual Meeting so they are now official ABA policy. Great work by the drafting committee. NCCUSL is now looking into the possibility of turning the Standards into a Uniform Act.

We are also starting a major outreach to law students. This will be kicked off in Seattle, where we will be doing a program for law students on careers in family law. We have 100 law students signed up. We will then be taking this show on the road and hope to get panels into as many law schools as possible. We will be putting together a "how-to" kit so if you have a law school in your city and would be willing to put together a panel or sit on a panel on careers in family law, please let me know.

We are all getting excited about the fall meeting in Seattle next week. We have almost 200 people registered and all of our events are sold out. The CLE is going to be terrific, thanks for CLE co-chairs Debbie Tate and Sam Schoonmaker IV and a very hard-working CLE committee. If you can't attend the meeting, the materials will be available after the meeting for purchase. Check the web site for more information.

This newsletter is a great place to share your accomplishments with your fellow Section members. Please send announcements of any achievements or awards that you would like included, whether for yourself or a colleague.

As always, we are here to listen to you so please feel free to contact your officers or staff at any time.