



# Certification Link

Your ABA Specialization Connection

## **The 2008 Roundtable hits the Big Easy!**

If there are any questions as to whether or not New Orleans is ready for us - they are! The city is vibrant, full of positive energy and will benefit from the income the ABA and its members are bringing to it - from all angles.

With all due respect, many areas are still recovering from the storm damage, which should not be ignored. We have special plans with that in mind! Stay tuned!

The meeting will be held at the Royal Sonesta Hotel located in the heart of the French Quarter on Bourbon Street, March 7 & 8, 2008. If you're interested in a quieter New Orleans experience, make sure you request a courtyard room. However, for those who want to soak up every bit that the Big Easy has to offer, try requesting a balcony room and get your beads ready!

The content of the program this year is innovative and will offer something for everyone. A few of the sessions you can expect will focus on Peer Review, the Application Process, the Future of Specialty Certification and of course, the infamous Certification Players!

In addition to the educational sessions that will be offered, we have planned a Friday night dinner cruise down the ole' Mississippi River -- Canjun food and authentic Jazz music included! So don't forget to purchase your tickets when they become available.

For those who are interested in offering their services to the areas outside the city which are still in desperate need of some TLC, a community service project has been set up with the Beacon of Hope, a Nonprofit Organization. Immediately after the Roundtable meeting adjourns on Saturday, there will be a bus waiting to take you out into the trenches (location TBA). From 1:00 - 5:00 pm, volunteers will participate in a New Orleans beautification project. So grease those elbows and warm your hearts as you give something back to a well-deserving community.

Bear in mind that the city is still in a financial recovery mode, please remember that every little bit helps -- so shop and eat as much as possible (does anyone really need their arm twisted in order to do this??)

**Please feel free to make your hotel reservations now by calling 1-800-Sonesta and refer to the ABA Standing Committee on Specialization 2008 Roundtable Meeting. The room block closes on Feb. 12th, 2008, so make your reservations now in order to get the special room rate of \$180.00 per night. Conference registration materials will follow soon after the holidays -- so keep your eyes and ears open and we'll see YOU on the Bayou!**

Winter 07-08

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# What's Going on in Minnesota?

Minnesota Lawyer's Mutual has announced that it is filing for approval to provide a 5% rate credit on malpractice policies for Certified Specialists. MLM is the Minnesota State Bar Association endorsed provider of professional liability coverage. If approved, the 5% rate credit will make Minnesota the second jurisdiction to provide a state-wide discount for Certified Specialist's malpractice insurance.

Last December, after seven months of study, the Supreme Court-appointed a Taskforce on Legal Certification in Minnesota and published its conclusions. Among them, it found;

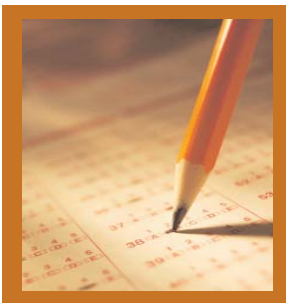
- The public benefits from having a specialist program where credentials can be determined and monitored by a local, independent board and specialist claims can be verified.
- The public expects the court or the profession to determine the qualifications of specialists and generally agrees with the criteria currently in use [by the MSBA Certification programs].
- The MSBA and the Minnesota State Board of Legal Certification (separate entities in Minnesota) both had a responsibility to explore ways in which to create new specialty areas with additional specialists in order to support legal specialization for the benefit of the public.

MSBA staff has recommended to Association Governance that two things occur in response to the Taskforce Report:

1. A staff position be funded for one year to develop at least two new specialty areas. Two MSBA Sections have already voted to become certifying agencies - Criminal Law and Labor & Employment - but without staff assistance have found it difficult to proceed with the accreditation process.
2. A Certification Standing Committee be formed and charged with developing an ongoing marketing plan to increase awareness of the value of legal specialist certification among MSBA members and the public.

The Assembly will vote on these staff recommendations in mid-December, 2007.

Gena Berglund has accepted the position of MSBA Certified Legal Specialists. Gena is an attorney with experience in both the private and public sectors. Meaghan Harper has become Director of MSBA Section Services. Since the MSBA Sections have served as Certification Accrediting Agencies, she will remain involved in publicizing efforts and general support for the existing certification programs as well as supporting the development of further section accrediting agencies.



The MSBA Real Property Specialist examination will be offered February 23, 2008. The examination is offered only every other year. The application period opens October 1st of the preceding year.



## ABCs New Executive Director and Assistant Director

By: John F. Young  
Chairman Of The ABC Marketing Committee  
Block Markus & Williams, LLC  
Denver, Colorado

As many of you know, for the past year the American Board of Certification has enjoyed the services of both a full-time executive director and a full-time assistant director. Our executive director, **Dian Gilmore** joined the American Board of Certification on December 1, 2006. Dian oversees the operations of the organization including Board governance, committee liaison functions, marketing, communications, planning, state regulation, and accreditation and policy issues.

Prior to joining the American Board of Certification, Dian held the Executive Vice President position for a Chamber of Commerce in Iowa. Dian brings over twenty-five years of association management experience to the American Board of Certification. Her previous certification experience included the mandatory continuing education programs for the REALTOR® membership in their respective trade association.

Dian earned her B.A. in Political Science from Willamette University in Salem, Oregon in 1979, and recently received her IOM certification from the Institute of Organization Management in Madison, Wisconsin.

**Pamela J. Farmer** was named Assistant Executive Director for the American Board of Certification on November 26th, 2006. She contributed to the relocation of the ABC office from Alexandria, Virginia to Cedar Rapids, Iowa in December of 2006. Her background encompasses over twenty years of experience in office administration, accounting and business management. In this position she is responsible for the daily office functions, financial operations of the organization and member records management. Her main goal as the new assistant executive director is to provide excellent member customer service.

If you have any questions, concerns or comments, please contact either Dian at [director@abcworld.org](mailto:director@abcworld.org), (319) 365-222 or Pamela at [assistantdirector@abcworld.org](mailto:assistantdirector@abcworld.org) or (319) 365-2222.

Dian and Pam will both be in attendance at the ABI Winter Leadership Conference in Rancho Mirage, California from December 6 through the 8th. We are hoping all ABC members in attendance can stop by the ABC booth to meet Dian and Pam. Also, please remember that the ABC will be hosting a cocktail reception at the ABI Winter Leadership Conference on Friday, December 7th from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.



**The Concise Guide to Legal Specialization is now  
online and can be downloaded for FREE!**

**Please visit:**

**<http://www.abanet.org/legalservices/specialization/>**





This information is pulled from various websites, please check with the organizations, as information may be updated.

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## Upcoming Events with the NCDD

2008 Winter Session  
January 24 -25, 2008  
Session Title:  
"You Can't Stop the Waves But You Can Learn to Surf"  
Waikiki Beach, HI

National College for DUI Defense, Inc.  
Board Certification Examination  
January 23, 2008  
Waikiki Beach, HI  
Application process is closed for the 2008 exam.  
For information regarding the next exam, please call Rhea Kirk, NCDD Executive Director, 334-264-1950.

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### Check out the new Legal Beavers website!

Legal Beavers is a national directory and community forum for legal specialists to network. Please visit [www.legalbeavers.com](http://www.legalbeavers.com)



### We Want Your Ideas!

**Have an idea for a future CertLink article?  
Does your program have news you want to share? Send any submissions to [specialization@abanet.org](mailto:specialization@abanet.org) or contribute to the Specialization ListServ. Not on the ListServ? It's free and open to anyone interested in specialization. Email Sara Pekar at [PekarS@staff.abanet.org](mailto:PekarS@staff.abanet.org)**

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