Carol N. Park-Conroy, Chair

In my last column, I mentioned that I am attending as many Section committee meetings this year as I possibly can. Our committees are extremely active and their contributions to the Section are truly remarkable in many ways.

Among them is the quality of the educational programs routinely presented at the committee meetings. These programs are typically scheduled at lunchtime and include guest speakers who have particular expertise in the subject at hand. They typically include private practitioners, corporate counsel, and/or representatives from the government who share their (sometimes different) perspectives on the issues. The subjects are selected because of the relevancy to the committees’ missions and the practice of its members. For example (and without meaning to slight any of the excellent programs I have attended), the Accounting Cost and Pricing Committee invited a spokesperson from the Defense Contract Audit Agency to speak; the Dispute Resolution Committee sponsored a telephonic presentation by J. Anderson Little, author of Making Money Talk; and the Battle Space and Contingency Procurement Committee secured the participation of representatives of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Department of Defense for a discussion of OMB Policy Letter 11-01, “Performance of Inherently Government and Critical Functions.”

And, while I am on the subject of educational programs, I want to mention the Continuing Legal Education (CLE) webinar/teleconferences the Section typically presents in partnership with ABA-CLE. So far this year, we have presented only two such teleconference programs: “The Impact of Stanford v. Roche on Private Party Transactions: Inventor Ownership and Government Rights under Bayh-Dole,” sponsored by the Intellectual Property Committee; and “The Most Important Government Contract Related Cases of 2011,” sponsored by the Contract Claims and Disputes Resolution Committee. I am pleased to report that both programs were very successful. Webinar/teleconference CLE programs are not only a way for our members to earn CLE credits, but they are also a source of revenue for the Section. I encourage the Section committee co-chairs to take a close look at your committee programs, select at least one that is likely to have broad appeal despite the fact it was first presented at a committee meeting, and sponsor it as a Section CLE teleconference in partnership with ABA-CLE. These webinar/teleconference ABA-CLE

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9.105-2(b)(2)(iv)).

21. Id.
22. Id.
25. Id.

This brings me to my final comment. The Obama administration has been issuing many new proposed regulations. Regulatory Coordinating Committee Chair Kara Sacilotto, with the good help of Craig Smith, performs an invaluable service to the Section by identifying proposed regulations and circulating them to the appropriate committees for review and potential comment. Dan Gordon, the former OFPP administrator, publicly praised the Section for the quality of our comments and emphasized that our comments are welcome and seriously considered. While the number of these proposed rules and the deadlines for comments can become constraints, it is extremely important for each committee and each committee member to put forth the effort needed to ensure that the Section submits thoughtful comment letters when appropriate.

Changing subjects, the Federal Procurement Institute (FPI), held this year on March 22-23 in Annapolis, Maryland, is the Section’s premier educational program. A huge thank you goes to the 18th Annual FPI program cochairs, Agnes Dover, Dan Graham, and Robin Ricketts, for a job exceedingly well done. Thanks also to Marcia Madsen for organizing and moderating the False Claims Act practicum on Wednesday, March 21, and to moderators Scott McCaleb for the bid protest panel, Stu Nibley for examination of the government’s intensified enforcement initiatives, Eric Nelson for the construction luncheon program, Judge Cheryl Scott for chairing the Public Contract Law Journal’s writing competition and introduction of Collin Swan, this year’s winner, Karen Manos for the panel on audits and the new business systems rule, Jeffery Smith for reviewing current trends in the industrial base, Judge Diana Dickinson for leading the judges panel, Mike McGill for the exploration of organizational conflicts of interest, Alan Chwotkin for the discussion of fiscal and budgetary pressures, and Dana Vaden for the examination of ethical conflicts between clients and their lawyers.

My last piece of news for this column is about the newly revamped 7th Annual State & Local Procurement Symposium held this year in conjunction with the ABA Section of State and Local Government Law on April 19-20 in Washington, D.C. The program featured a special practicum sponsored solely by our Section that explored vendor-state communications and five cosponsored panels that covered state and local hot topics, public infrastructure procurement, minority contracting, municipal restructuring and bankruptcy, and ethics. This was the first spring meeting to be cosponsored by the Sections of Public Contract Law and State and Local Government Law, a relationship we hope will flourish. Very special thanks to program cochairs Missy Copeland and Jeff Eckland who set a high standard for next year, when the symposium will be held in Nashville, Tennessee. I am particularly pleased to note that Missy and Jeff furthered our working relationship with the National Association of State Procurement Officials (NASPO) by including Ron Bell and Dianne Lancaster, NASPO’s current and immediate-past chairs, among the program speakers.

Finally, I continue to welcome your thoughts, comments, ideas and suggestions. You can reach me at (703) 282-3392 or carolparkconroy@gmail.com. <PL>