

Calendar in this issue for upcoming programs that might appeal to you. Due to the success of our annual U.S.-European Tax Planning Strategies Conference, now going into its eighth year, we are expanding our CLE offerings in the international tax arena and plan to undertake a two-day conference focusing on U.S.-Latin America tax planning strategies, which is tentatively scheduled for June 2008. Join us for one or more of our CLE programs, and you'll see why they are consistently considered some of the best in the market.

The Tax Section Council recently approved the formation of a new Committee on Publications. The Committee's mission is to focus and develop the Section's publishing program to serve our members, the tax profession, and the public. In coming months, the Committee will be looking at updating or expanding publications such as *The Tax Lawyer* and the *NewsQuarterly*, and possibly developing new titles. This issue of the *NewsQuarterly* is an example of

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some of the cosmetic changes we are making to our publications to incorporate the Section's new logo and design. If you are interested in writing for one of the Tax Section's periodicals, or proposing a new publication, please contact Lou Mezzullo, Vice Chair – Publications.

Finally, the Section's Officers, Incoming Officers, Council Directors, and Incoming Council Directors held a retreat this past July to discuss Section activities, procedures and policies. Our discussions focused on how the Section can best meet its goals, and how we can better serve our members. Among other items, we reviewed our

government submissions process, the value of our visits to Capitol Hill, the format of our meetings, and our CLE and member outreach. If you have thoughts about any of these issues or others, please let us know. You may reach Tax Section staff at 202.662.8670 or tax@abanet.org. We welcome your ideas and feedback.

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NEWS BRIEFS

JANET SPRAGENS PRO BONO AWARD NOMINATIONS SOUGHT

Each year the Tax Section presents its Janet Spragens Pro Bono Award to a member or members of a firm who devote their time and energies to pro bono representation, particularly representation of low-income taxpayers. The award may be based upon any of the following criteria:

- Handling a significant number of tax controversies for low-income taxpayers on a pro bono basis over an extended period of time, or intensive involvement over a limited time with significant impact
- Voluntarily forming, operating or

participating in organizations, such as low-income taxpayer clinics (LITCs) devoted to representation of low-income taxpayers, particularly if such participation is over an extended period

- Formation, supervision and participation in programs to assist tax controversies, including "attorney of the day" programs for the Tax Court
- Mentoring law students and other individuals who work for LITCs
- Preparation of resource materials for LITCs and other low-income programs
- Providing pro bono legal assistance to tax-exempt organizations, especially those formed to help low-income taxpayers

PLEASE SEND YOUR NOMINATIONS ALONG WITH SUPPORTING MATERIALS BY MAIL OR E-MAIL TO:

Robert E. McKenzie
120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 1200
Chicago, Illinois 60606-3910
remckenzie@arnstein.com

PLEASE ALSO SEND A COPY TO:

Christine Brunswick
740 15th Street, NW, 10th Floor
Washington, DC 20005
brunswickc@staff.abanet.org
The deadline for nominations is December 1, 2007.

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There is agreement across a substantial component of the respondent pool with regard to perceptions that certain recent changes in the structure and procedures of IRS Appeals have had a negative effect on that office's independence or appearance of independence.

case. The negative comments touch upon concerns with Appeals Officers who seem unable to reach a decision without consulting the IRS National Office; the influence of industry specialists or other experts to the detriment of the independence of the Appeals

Officers; perceptions that Appeals Officers who come up through the ranks of revenue officers or examination agents bring with them the attitudes of their previous positions rather than attitudes more appropriate to an appellate official; and that competent,

experienced Appeals Officers are retiring, ceding the arena to individuals who are not as well trained. In addition, there are substantial concerns about delay in resolution caused by lost files, heavy caseloads, and lack of timely communication. ■

NEWS BRIEFS *continued from page 4*

LAW STUDENT TAX CHALLENGE

Now in its seventh year as an ongoing project of the Tax Section's Young Lawyers Forum, the 2007-2008 Law Student Tax Challenge is underway. Designed to stimulate and reward law student interest in and knowledge of the tax law as it applies to "real life" tax planning situations, this nationwide competition is open to law students attending any ABA-accredited law school.

Teams are initially evaluated on two criteria: a memorandum to a senior partner and a letter to the client explaining the result. Based on this written work product, 6 teams from the J.D. Division and 4 teams from the LL.M. Division receive a free trip to the Section's 2008 Midyear Meeting, January 17-19, at the Loews Lake Las Vegas Resort, where they will defend their submissions before a panel of some of the country's top tax lawyers.

Written submissions are due November 12, 2007. This year's problem focuses on a like-kind exchange and issues related to the formation of a partnership. To review the contest rules and this year's problem, visit www.abanet.org/tax/lstc.

FALL MEETING MATERIALS AVAILABLE ONLINE

Did you miss the Joint Fall CLE Meeting in Vancouver? You can still benefit from over 160 papers that were presented at the meeting by logging on to the Tax Section's website. As a benefit of membership, Section members can view and search materials from the Fall Meeting, as well as other Section Meetings at: <http://www.abanet.org/tax/commonline/>.

FALL MEETING SPONSORS—THANK YOU

The Tax Section would like to thank the following sponsors of the 2007 Joint Fall CLE Meeting:

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PRO BONO OPPORTUNITY IN WASHINGTON, DC

The Pro Bono Committee of the Tax Section will be implementing a pilot program for member volunteers in the Washington, DC area to assist in the training of VITA volunteers to prepare returns on military bases in the Metropolitan Washington, DC area. Tax Section volunteers will not be asked to prepare returns themselves, but instead will be asked to train the preparers. Because the pilot is limited to the Washington area, we are only soliciting volunteers from that region. To learn more about this pro bono opportunity, check the Section web site at www.abanet.org/tax.

