

# **ABA General Practice, Solo & Small Firm Division Chair's Mid-Term Report Status of the Division**

February, 2010

Greetings, ABA General Practice, Solo & Small Firm Division Leaders and Members:

The attached report provides you a snapshot of our incredible progress over the past six months in the ABA GPSolo Division. Based on your collective efforts, you have moved this Division to incredible heights and achievement through phenomenal service to others. I can't begin to thank you enough for your sincere dedication, enthusiasm and commitment to the practice of law and the service to general practitioners, solos and small firm lawyers across the United States. We have six more months to go before the next bar year when Joe DeWoskin will become chair, and we will deliver to him a Division that is doing the lion's share of the business in service to the ABA, the profession of law, our constituent members and of, course, our clients.

In September 2009, the GPSolo Awards Committee confirmed the winners of the 2009 Difference Makers Awards. We had a total of 11 nominees for the various awards. The Difference Makers Awards program recognizes extraordinary lawyers who "make a difference" by breaking down barriers for women, people of color, and people with disabilities regardless of sexual orientation. At the Division's Fall Meeting, the GPSolo Awards Committee awarded First Lady Michelle Obama with a special recognition – the First Lady was unable to attend; but the Division sent her plaque to her. The following distinguished members of the bar were recognized:

Dr. Edgar Cahn of Washington, DC, received the Making a Difference through Community Service award. This award honors an attorney living or deceased who made a significant lifetime contribution to the local community through community service.

Barbara King of Albany, New York, received the Making a Difference through Pro Bono Work award. This award honors an attorney, law firm, corporate legal department, government attorney office or institution in the legal profession that has made an outstanding commitment to volunteer legal services for the poor and disadvantaged.

Holly Fujie of Los Angeles, California, received the Making a Difference through Service to the Profession award. This award honors an attorney living or deceased who made a significant contribution to the legal profession through service to the profession.

GPSolo collaborated with the ABA Standing Committee on Group & Prepaid Legal Services and the American Prepaid Legal Services Institute (API) on the article "Legal Services Plans: More Business and More Clients," which is in the September issue of *GPSolo* magazine. The September issue of *GPSolo* is one of two "Best of ABA

Sections" issues published each year. **It was reprinted in digested form 17 articles originally published in the periodicals of various ABA entities, accompanied in each case by a small sidebar with more information about that entity** (i.e., website URL, periodicals and book the entity publishes, and CLE and other educations programs the entity offers). Other highlights in this issue included "Paradigm Shifts and Pendulum Swings in Child Custody," "Costly Technology Gotchas," "Mastering the Blind Cross-Examination," and "Dealing with Impasse in Commercial Mediation."

We are proud to announce that the GPSolo Technology e-Report was distributed on September 1. Highlights of this issue included "Technology-Enabled Services: The Next Generation of SaaS," "MacNotes: Updated iPhone software will even help you find your phone if you lose it," "Surviving Email: Could Google-hosted mailing lists make real money?" "How to primp your PDFs," and "Xerox's Phaser 8860MFPMP and Quickbooks for the Mac."

*HIPAA for the General Practitioner* by Melanie D. Bragg was released. This publication includes new changes to the HIPAA law from the Economic Stimulus Act of 2009. When HIPAA became law in 1996, the move already had begun from a paper-based patient data system to an electronic one. This migration poses complex security and privacy issues. Over the next six and a half years, the HIPAA implementation took place with the following goals in mind: improve access to health insurance; minimize healthcare billing fraud, waste and abuse; and Increase efficiency and effectiveness of the health care system. HIPAA for the General Practitioner provides specific, strategic, and practical information pertaining to what each state has done in response to the HIPAA preemption provisions. This book demystifies the 692-page HIPAA law, and explains what general practitioners need to know to help their clients. A companion CD is included, featuring forms to be used as a guide to drafting HIPAA provisions.

GPSolo Division's website was migrated to the SharePoint platform.

GPSolo author David Steiger, *The Globalized Lawyer*, wrote a feature article that will appear in *Business Law Today*.

The GPSolo Officers met with Carolyn Lamm and Steve Zack during the SOC Fall Leadership Meeting to discuss the concerns of the solo and small firm practitioners and how the Division could assist with upcoming organization-wide initiatives for this demographic.

GPSolo Chair-Elect, Joseph DeWoskin, was one of the panelists for the SOC Fall Leadership Meeting plenary session, "Practical Tips for Section Success Using the Internal Resources of the ABA."

GPSolo released *Effectively Staffing Your Law Firm* by jennifer j. rose. *Effectively Staffing Your Law Firm* provides lawyers with the necessary tools to manage their workload and to determine staffing needs that make sense for their firm. Additionally, it

provides insights to help guide the many decisions that face a lawyer who is running a firm, whether solo or staffed.

The highlights of the GPSolo Fall Meeting and National Solo & Small Firm Conference are below – suffice it to say, it was one of the best meetings in years. Although the attendance was slightly under what was expected, 215 people attended the members and sponsors of the meeting had many opportunities to network with each and build their connections. We owe a great deal of gratitude to Larry Feinstein, Noah Davis and especially, Vicki Levin Eskin for producing this incredible event.

- Was featured in the October 14 issue of the Daily Journal. The Daily Journal is the largest legal paper in California.
- Held more than 30 CLE sessions over two days including a Young Lawyers Institute at the NSSFC.
- Held its first live teleconference broadcast from the conference. Speaker Jay Foonberg presented “How to Hang Your Shingle and Start Your Firm.”
- Held two public service projects. A collection of school supplies was collected for Uncommon Good – Fostering idealism in education, medicine, and law. The Division collected an entire box full of supplies along with \$700 in cash and gift cards for this organization. Additionally, members were encouraged to sign the Birmingham Pledge. The Birmingham Pledge is a grassroots effort to recognize the dignity and worth of every individual, by making a personal, daily commitment to remove prejudice from our own lives and to treat all people with respect.
- The GPSolo Law Student Committee held an information session, “How to Get a Job at a Small Firm” at Loyola University Law School. More than 70 students attended the session. The program was video recorded and streamed live to the university students. The session is available to be viewed at <https://technology.lls.edu/cevents/>. Due to the strong interest of law students to go solo or work at a small firm, GPSolo would like to bring this workshop to more law schools. Justin Silverman, ABA GPSolo Law Student Liaison, is coordinating this effort.
- We had substantial support by our corporate sponsors at this meeting. In fact, the Chair secured an additional \$10,000 from the Chairman of the San Manuel Band of Tribes in Southern California for this meeting.

Further, the Division created several video vignettes of member leaders, which will be used as a leadership training program for committee chairs to help them understand the Division’s structure, and to assist them with planning for the upcoming year. These video vignettes will shortly be posted on the Division’s website. We appreciate the efforts of Jeff Allen, Vicki Huebner, Tommy Hartnett, and Dee Lee to make this happen!

Additionally, GPSolo published the fourth installment of its well-received “Bumps in the Road” series in *GPSolo* magazine (October/November 2009). This special issue

addresses the mental health, substance abuse, and quality-of-life challenges confronted all too frequently by lawyers. Feature articles include: "Overcoming Depression" by Daniel Lukasik, "Never Enough" by Michael J. Burke, "Relapse after Long-Term Sobriety" by Janet Piper Voss, "Lawyer Seeks Treatment, Boss Seeks Assurance" by Todd C. Scott, "Discipline and Disability: When Is Disease a Defense?" by Mary Robinson, "The Ethics of Reporting on Your Colleague—or Yourself" by Thomas P. Sukowicz, "The Families of Solos and Small Firm Practitioners" by David L. Gates, "Balancing Life in a High-Stress Job" by Susan Riegler, "Managing Anxiety in Uncertain Economic Times" by Rebecca Nerison, and "Being Prepared for Unexpected Events" by Lloyd D. Cohen. Individual copies of the magazine normally sell for \$20, but ABA publishing has arranged a discounted bulk order price of \$50 for ten copies (plus shipping costs; IL residents add 10.25% tax; DC residents add 5.75% tax). Orders are welcome both from members and nonmembers of the ABA. The ABA is also extending this offer to the remaining inventory of the first three editions of Bumps in the Road (July/August 2001, October/November 2004, and October/November 2006).

In the aforementioned *GPSolo* issue, the Division collaborated with the ABA Center for Professional Responsibility on an article, "Legal Ethics." This article highlighted the various ABA services available for members to assist them to make informed decisions about ethics-related issues.

Two issues of the *SOLO* e-Newsletters were sent. The *SOLO* e-Newsletter is a handy, quick-read newsletter e-mailed quarterly. *SOLO* vol 15 no 3 was focused on Immigration Law. Highlights of this issue include "Representing Noncitizens in Criminal Cases," "Lost in Translation," "New I-9 Requirements and E-Verify," "Marriage to a Foreign National Love (and a lot of paperwork) conquers all," and "Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)". *SOLO* vol 15 no 4 was focused on Arbitration & Mediation. Highlights of this issue include, "Consumer Arbitration," "Care and Feeding of a Mediator," "Arbitration: Assured Resolution," and "Consensual Arbitration."

*GPSolo* circulated a proposed Report and Recommendation on Military Loan Repayment to the various ABA entities for comments and/or co-sponsorship. This Report and Recommendation was approved with changes at the Orlando Mid Year meeting in the House of Delegates. Huge thanks to General Thomas Hemingway, who led this effort along with our esteemed HOD Liaisons, Dwight Smith, Sharon Stevens and Bill Hogan. Co-sponsors of this proposed resolution include Recommendation include the Government and Public Sector Lawyers Division, Section of Labor & Employment Law, Senior Lawyers Division, and the Standing Committee on Law and National Security.

Our Solosez group grew to over 3,000 subscribers. In Los Angeles and in Orlando, they met and dined together. This group continues to grow and is a growing source of

new members in GPSolo. The following SoloSez local groups met over the last several months: Long Island, NY; Northern IL / Southern WI; New Jersey; Los Angeles during the GPSolo National Solo & Small Firm Conference; Nashville, TN; Central Florida; Triangle Area, NC; Northshore MA; DC/ VA / MD Group; Columbus, OH; and San Francisco, CA and many more.

GPSolo released *The Commercial Real Estate Lawyer's Job: A Survival Guide* by Brad Dashoff and John Antonacci. Intended as an essential tool for both new and seasoned real estate lawyers, this book provides basic instruction on commercial real estate assignments they are likely to receive. *The Commercial Real Estate Lawyer's Job* explains the most common transactions, and the tasks associated with them. It offers practical advice for organizing workload; provides tips for success; and details vital resources needed for real estate lawyers.

Additionally, GPSolo released a new edition of an ABA best seller, *Preparing Witnesses, Third Edition*, by Daniel I. Small. Best-selling ABA author, Dan Small, has further mastered and detailed the process of witness preparation. Parts of it are written in the “voice” of speaking to a client, because learning how to best communicate these ideas is often as important as the ideas themselves. This publication includes CD-ROM with all appendix material.

Through all of this hard work with publications, GPSolo is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest ABA entity raising revenue in the ABA only behind LPM and Business Law. GPSolo published 390 titles! The average revenue generated by a GPSolo book in the first 12 months was from \$25K to \$35K. The Average monthly backlist revenue was from \$15K to \$25K. GPSolo is positioned for growth, having one of the strongest backlist portfolios to support monthly revenue. In fact, **GPSolo bookstore sales are up 44%** from last year and this trend is anticipated to continue for the rest of the fiscal year.

In November 2009, GPSolo held a teleconference and live audio webcast called, “Networking Effectively and Ethically” for 1.5 hours of CLE ETHICS credit. This program focused on the positive aspects of networking and on how to make it a priority in a manner that feels comfortable for you. Additionally, the expert speaker, Roy S. Ginsburg, J.D., discussed the ethical traps of networking, and addressed issues such as: examples of when effective networking could turn into unethical solicitation and the handling of referral fees.

Additionally, GPSolo held another teleconference and live audio webcast called, “General Practice 101: Avoiding Solo/Small Firm Ethical Traps” for 1.5 hours of CLE ETHICS credit. The speakers were William K. Mills, and David B. Parker. The program focused on the basic concepts every lawyer needs to practice defensively, including practical approaches to avoiding and minimizing potential malpractice and conflicts of interest. The California Rules of Professional Conduct and legal decisions that define the “Standard of Practice” as finite boundaries or “zones” within which lawyers can

practice in relative safety were examined. The faculty provided practical tools to aid lawyers in avoiding predictable and obvious obstacles

GPSolo also published "The Lawyer's Guide to Negotiation" by X.M. Frascogna, Jr. and H. Lee Hetherington. More than 95 percent of all civil claims are concluded by negotiation, not litigation. Of those claims that actually go to trial, only a fraction go to verdict, and of those that do, a substantial portion are settled by negotiation pending appeal. Every conceivable type of business relationship is created by negotiation. The overwhelming majority of inmates currently serving time in US penal institutions are there because of a negotiated plea bargain. Negotiation is by far the most frequently used device to resolve conflicts and claims. This book combines a lawyer's legal training and experience with keen interpersonal skills that achieve tangible results. The Lawyer's Guide to Negotiation dispels some long-held negotiation myths while offering lawyers a consistent and effective approach to establish a framework for any bargaining challenge. A free live CLE program based on this book was held at the ABA Midyear Meeting on Saturday, February 6 in Orlando, Florida.

We are proud of our GPSolo Technology e-Report which included "Is Your Website OK Today?" "SaaS Security: Can You Trust Your Data in the Cloud?" "Setting Up a Web-Based Virtual Law Office," "MacNotes," "Surviving Email," "Sites for Sore Eyes," "TechNotes," and "Product Notes."

In an effort to ensure the very best continued leadership, the GPSolo Nominating Committee, chaired by Alan Olson, submitted the following slate of nominated candidates for the positions of Division Vice Chair, Division Secretary and Division Council Member-at-Large for which there are five (5) positions for the bar year beginning in August of 2010: Benes Aldana, Vice Chair; Jennifer Rymell, Secretary; Gary Anderson, Richard Evangelista, Jennifer Hilsabeck, Kathleen Hopkins, and G. Rawson Stevens, Council Members-At-Large.

The Officers and Long Range Planning Committee members met in October 2009 to develop a three-year strategic plan for the Division. This effort was led by our Vice Chair, Laura Farber and facilitated by Sarina Butler, who has facilitated several long range planning meetings for several GPSolo Chair-Elects. The Division's original long range plan was developed in Fall 2000 with revisions made in 2001 and 2003. From time to time other revisions were proposed by the Division's Long Range Planning Committee, but none required substantive action. The plan is completely new, although it has links to and benefits from work done by the Long Range Planning Committee in the intervening years of the prior plan. The ABA GPSolo Council officially adopted this plan in December. The plan is available on the website at <http://new.abanet.org/divisions/genpractice/Pages/default.aspx>

The ABA GPSolo Council also approved co-sponsorship of the recommendation from the Commission on Domestic Violence to support reauthorization and funding of the Violence Against Women Act (“VAWA”) and similar legislation that promotes access to justice and safety for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking within the United States.

ABA GPSolo held a CLE teleconference, “The Six Systems Every Law Firm Owner Needs for More Freedom, More Money and More Happy Clients” on December 10. Alexis Martin Neely guided the participants through her experience of leaving the big law firm life and starting her own firm with limited financial resources, while she was the breadwinner in her family, had a baby at home and another on the way.

Regarding CLE success, GPSolo’s teleconference, “Counseling Clients about the New FTC Rules for Use of Testimonials and Endorsements in Advertising” had over 100 registrants of which approximately 14 registered to become a member of the GPSolo Division. GPSolo and the Center for CLE initiated a membership recruitment program associated with our teleconference programs. The membership recruitment program allows a non-member to join GPSolo when he or she registers for the teleconference.

ABA-CLE authorized the following pricing structure, which does not affect the Division’s bottom-line. Additionally, GPSolo held another teleconference, “In Good Faith: Navigating the New Federal RESPA Rules.” Sixty-seven people joined and of that number, 10% became GPSolo members. Ensuring the best rate for GPSolo members, below are the new ABA CLE pricing schedules:

- \$90 GPSolo members (this is what we currently offer and will not change)
- \$135 ABA members who join the division
- \$150 ABA Members
- \$185 Non- ABA Members
- \$75 Additional registrants who use the same phone line

Overall, the Programs Board with David Lefton as Chair has doubled our CLE teleconferences and revenue this year. We really appreciate their efforts as well as Nicole Nikodem, Yolanda Muhammad and the ABA Center for CLE staff!

Also in November 2009, the *GPSolo* Magazine Article in Award-Nominated Publication Debra S. Hart-Cohen’s article “Canines in the Courtroom,” from the well-received “Animal Law” issue of *GPSolo* magazine, has been reprinted in the *NAWBA Journal*. Based in part on the strength of Debra’s contribution, that publication has been nominated for the Dog Writers Association of America’s Best Club Newsletter Format Award.

In January, our Division sent a call out for nominations for the 2010 Solo and Small Firm Awards Program Nominations. The Annual Awards program recognizes dedication to the practice of law as general practitioners or solo or small firm lawyers. Each year the Division honors outstanding solo and small firm practitioners, as well as bar leaders and bar associations at the Division's Awards Ceremony held at the Spring Meeting. Recognition is given for Solo and Small Firm Lifetime Achievement Award, Solo and Small Firm Project Award and Solo and Small Firm Trainer Award. Similarly, in January, our Division sent a call out for Diversity Fellowship Nominations. The Diversity Fellowship program continues to provide our Division with the very best leadership and ensures we are tracking with the ABA Goal III. On the issue of Goal III, the ABA Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity said:

GOAL III Report:  
General Practice Solo and Small Firm Division

"Last year we noted that the tide seemed to be turning in a positive direction for the General Practice, Solo and Small Firm Division. We were right and this year the tide has turned in a positive direction for both the number and percentage of minorities in Section leadership. The 99 minority leaders in the Section this year not only improves on last year's numbers but surpasses the 69 minority members that the Division peaked within 2005-06. The percentage of minorities in leadership increased impressively from 12.43% to 17.97% this year. The decrease in Caucasian members in leadership and the Division's addition of 20 new leadership positions, combined to help boost minority participation rates. Diverse members hold positions in eight of the nine leadership categories. Minorities made the most impact in the Publication Authors, Other Leadership, and Programming Faculty areas. All minority groups, including Native Americans, are well represented in Division leadership. The Division dedicated \$9,800 to diversity initiatives. The Division established the Diversity Fellows Program 10 years ago and continues to sponsor this very successful program, which annually provides leadership development opportunities to four diverse members of the Division. After successful completion of the fellowship year, the recipients are appointed to regularly funded positions within the Division the following bar year. We applaud the Division's success in boosting its minority numbers and percentages this year."

We are definitely headed in the right direction and with the hard work of Ricky Evangelista and Elizabeth Bardauskis leading our Diversity Committee; we are exceptionally well suited for continued success. Applications for Diversity Scholars are available and the deadline for submission is March 21, 2010. Please help us to recruit the very best for our Division.

Similar to a call for diversity, we have sent a call out for our Young Lawyers Fellowship nominations. GPSolo is pleased to announce the sponsorship of two Young Lawyer fellowships in the Division during the 2010-2011 bar year. Nomination application deadline is March 31, 2010. The strength of our Division to grow and continue its success is depended upon a rich and full pipeline of volunteers. We have been fortunate to receive this valuable resource from the ABA YLD. In effort to continue this great relationship, we are joining the YLD in May 2010 for a joint Spring Meeting in the

US Virgin Islands. Additionally, joining us will be the St. Thomas Bar Association, who is hosting our meeting. With phenomenal programming and activities, this meeting promises to be the best GPSolo spring meeting in years. See you in St. Thomas!

Speaking of meetings, GPSolo was well received at the ABA Midyear meeting. During this meeting, we hosted the Smart Soloing: Effective Strategies for Diverse Lawyers CLE which was a huge success. The panel, which included: Kim Cooke, Paula Frederick, Elio Martinez, Jim Schwartz, Youshea Berry and Scott LaBarre was exceptional. Over 500 people registered to participate on-line via webcast and we had over 80 people in the room. GPSolo also produced a CLE program called "The 5000 Year Old Formula: Negotiation From Moses to New Monday Morning - The Rules Haven't Changed". We had Standing Room only with 75 people in the room. The CLE program was paired with the book The Lawyer's Guide to Negotiation, by X.M. Frascogna, Jr. and H. Lee Hetherington, who was the speaker of the program.

Additionally, we were well represented at several diversity meetings and focus action groups. Chair, James Durant, actually presented on one such meeting that focused on diversity in the military. We were also present at Florida A & M School of Law, where Jeff Solomon, Jeff Allen and Steve Wilson and Chair James Durant discussed legal careers and bar passage to a gathering of about 30 law students. Huge thanks to Judge Gierke, who organized this event. The Division met with the Section of State and Local Government to discuss partnering between our two entities. We have planned a couple events to transpire during the ABA Annual Meeting in San Francisco. Additionally, we met with the Law Practice Management Section to discover and continue GPSolo and LPM efforts to confront the recession as it affects the profession of law. Our lead for this special project is Lee Kolczun who made the following report on GPSolo's efforts to assist our membership confront recession issues that detrimentally affect their ability to practice of law during this economy:

- A membership guide for Solo Practitioners – a compilation of ABA benefits and resources can be found online at [www.abanet.org/members/solo](http://www.abanet.org/members/solo). Many of these benefits pertain to small firm lawyers too.
- Easy-to-access CLE at little or no cost - online, podcasts, and teleconferences. Check out the *Solutions: Overcoming the Obstacles of Going and Being Solo in a Down Economy*. Listen as both seasoned as well as new solo practitioners discuss the steps involved in setting-up shop as a first-time solo. This expert faculty addressed some of the nuts and bolts of the practice such as: engagement letters, insurance issues, technology challenges, office logistics and the development of billing models. Additionally, they shared their strategy for building a client base as well collecting fees in a down economy. This teleconference is offered as part of the Recession Recovery Teleconference Series. It is available free to ABA members as a MP3 download at [www.abanet.org/cle/recoveryseries](http://www.abanet.org/cle/recoveryseries). Additionally, a complimentary CLE program is being offered to ABA members at the 2010 ABA Midyear Meeting, "Smart Soloing: Effective Strategies for Diverse Lawyers". It will be held on Friday, February 5, 2010 from 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm in the Northern Hemisphere A3 room, 5th Level,

at the Walt Disney World Dolphin Resort. Co-Sponsors: Office of the President, Presidential Initiative - Commission on Diversity, General Practice, Solo and Small Firm Division, Young Lawyers Division, Center for Professional Responsibility, Commission on the Impact of the Economic Crisis on the Profession and Legal Needs and Standing Committee on Continuing Legal Education. If members are unable to attend this live in person CLE program, they can join register for it on the web. The session will be recorded to be available as a download.

- GPSolo has more than 40 substantive committees. Membership can choose membership in three of these committees and have the opportunity to enhance their knowledge in practice areas ranging from elder law to juvenile law, bankruptcy to taxation.
- The GPSolo Law Student Committee held an information session, "How to Get a Job at a Small Firm" at Loyola University Law School this past October. The program was video recorded and streamed live to the university students. The session is available to be viewed at <https://technology.lls.edu/cevents/>. Due to the strong interest of law students to go solo or work at a small firm, GPSolo Law Student Liaison is coordinating an effort to bring this workshop to more law schools.
- One specific package of products known as the "Lawyer's Toolkit" provides value to (1) lawyers who have been laid off from firms and are seeking to transition into smaller firms or solo practice settings, (2) new lawyers who are graduating from law school without a job and need to consider hanging out their own shingle, going to work at a small firm or starting their own small firm with other new lawyers, and (3) lawyers who, for whatever reason, short term or long term, need to transition into either a small firm or solo practice. The Lawyer's Toolkit has a menu of options which consist of basic tools to establish a practice. These tools consist of a book on technology, software and the business aspect of opening up an office, choices between books on developing clients or how to staff a law firm (particularly for individuals who have existing clients and are seeking to go into a smaller firm or solo practice) and what we call the Survivor Series, which are based on substantive practice areas. This product provides instant value in a very practical, affordable manner.  
<http://www.abanet.org/abastore/index.cfm?section=main&fm=Product.AddToCart&pid=5150305P>
- SoloSez™ is an internet discussion forum for solo and small firm lawyers. It ranks as the most active of the ABA's e-mail listservs and subscribers number slightly over 2,800. SoloSez ([www.abanet.org/soloseznet](http://www.abanet.org/soloseznet)), a listserv where lawyers are able to ask questions of other lawyers throughout the country (and the world!). SoloSez provides a connecting point with the solo and small firm attorney in an environment geared to solving that attorney's problem and need for information. The need may be substantive or mundane practice advice but the support network of SoloSez is active and enabling.
- GPSolo publishes the *Best of ABA Sections* magazine biannually (every March and September). This magazine presents readers with reprinted articles from other ABA entities' publications, accompanied in each case by information about how to join the Section, Division or Forum where the article originated. This magazine is offered to all ABA Sections, Divisions, and Forums, as well as all state bar associations at a significantly reduced cost. The Massachusetts Bar Association and the Louisiana State Bar Association have taken advantage of this offer in the past.

- The GPSolo SOLO e-Newsletter's fall issue was dedicated to help lawyers during these difficult times. It was called "When Times are Tough."  
<http://new.abanet.org/divisions/genpractice/Pages/SoloNewsletter.aspx>
- The annual ABA GPSolo National Solo & Small Firm Conference offers diverse and high quality programming specifically for solos and small firm lawyers. The programs offered at the conference are recorded and available for purchase at a discounted rate.
- Affordable, high-quality insurance plans for solos and small firm lawyers. One of the frequent challenges encountered by solo and small firm lawyers is the lack of insurance resources that are typically available to members of larger firms or corporations. Ample insurance coverage is a critical component of a sound financial plan. These plans are available exclusively to ABA members, and they not only provide quality insurance coverage, they also give members an opportunity to give back to the legal profession. For more information, please visit the [ABE website](http://www.abendowment.org/) at <http://www.abendowment.org/>, [email the ABE](mailto:info@abendowment.org), or call toll free at 1-800-621-8981. The American Bar Endowment has added a new, dedicated solo/small firm toll-free number – 877-621-7676.
- Discounts on products lawyers need for your practice such as computer equipment, office supplies, and wireless communication devices through the ABA Member Advantage program. ABA Member Advantage programs are reviewed by lawyers for use by lawyers. Programs are continually monitored for usage, member satisfaction and overall value.  
<https://www.abanet.org/advantage/>
- The Standing Committee on Delivery of Legal Services website has a free training video available regarding Unbundling Legal Services. It is on the Economic Recovery website, it's the last entry under Resources on this page:  
<http://new.abanet.org/economicrecovery/practicemanagement.aspx>. This links to the page where the free 3 hour training video is available along with materials to help lawyers interested in offering this service to clients.
- LPM recently published an article, "15 Recession-Response Tips for Small Firm Lawyers," Solo and small firm lawyers can't afford to take a stick-your-head-in-the-sand approach to dealing with this economy. If you're in denial, you'll likely perish. If you want to survive—and who doesn't?—get moving on this to-do list.  
<http://www.abanet.org/lpm/magazine/articles/v35/is5/pg41.shtml>

During the executive committee meeting, Jim Silkenat and Chair James Durant led a discussion with several state delegates to the House of Delegates on matters affecting Solo and Small Firm Lawyers; specifically, the goal is to "gauge whether there is interest in organizing a leadership group to work on behalf of solo and small firm lawyer issues within the ABA structure and to develop programs and policies for the ABA that would promote participation in the ABA by this critically important group of practitioners." One of the first products that came out of this group, which is now called the LEADERSHIP

COALITION FOR SOLO MEMBERSHIP, was a letter signed by James Durant to the ABA Executive Director Search Committee giving specific guidance in what Solos and Small Firm Lawyers desire in an executive director. Thanks to Lee Kolczun who was instrumental in drafting that document.

Regarding the Solo Center – our next frontier, Chair James Durant has re-aligned leadership to place a “full-court” press on getting the Solo Center up and running this bar year. To assist him, GPSolo is likely to receive \$62K in funding to make the Solo Center a reality thanks to Kathleen Hopkins!

Regarding Division membership, it is slipping to historical proportions; however, through our incredible efforts led by Tony Alvarado, we are endeavoring to regain lost ground during this terrible economy. As an example, we have mailed letters to bar members offering a free 6<sup>th</sup> month membership with GPSolo. The letter went out last month, and we have already seen returns. Also, confronting the annual ABA-wide membership drop, Chair James Durant sent a personal letter to every member who dropped GPSolo in February 2010. We will continue to do all acts necessary and proper to build our membership and regain lost friends. We have also taken great strides to open the widest aperture for new members coming from the, 140,000 strong, ABA YLD. Our joint Spring Meeting with the YLD is just one example of our committed effort to continue grow our Division with new ideas, people, and perspective

As you can see, we have been very busy this last six months. We are proud of our accomplishments and look forward to another successful six months. A huge thank you goes out to our esteemed committee chairs and their hard working committees. Below is the play list of our very best:

Ryan Albrecht	Chair, Administrative & Government Law
Lesley Hoeing	Chair, Agricultural Law
Artika Tyner	Chair, Alternative Dispute Resolution
Larry Feinstein	Chair, Annual Solo Day Program
Marvin Dang	Chair, Awards
Marc Stern & Larry Feinstein	Co-Chairs, Bankruptcy
Jennifer Ator	Chair, Best of Sections Magazine
Michael Hurley	Chair, Book Publications
Elizabeth Bleakley	Chair, Business Advice and Financial Planning

Kenneth Ashman	Chair, Business Opportunities & Commercial Law
Benes Aldana	Chair, Bylaws
Stephen Williams	Chair, Communications
Rodd Walton	Vice Chair, Construction Law
Sharon Campbell	Chair, Consumer Protection
Jennifer Hilsabeck	Chair, Corporate Counsel
Brian Hermanson & Elio Martinez	Chair, Corporate Sponsor
Eileen Sullivan	Chair, Criminal Law
Richard Evangelista	Chair, Diversity
Kenneth Vercammen	Chair, Elder Law
Parag Patel	Chair, Estate Planning, Probate & Trust
Herman "Sparky" Gierke III & Eiko Harris	Chairs, Ethics and Professional Responsibility
Lynn Newsome	Chair, Family Law
H. Stanley Riffle	Chair, Finance
Anthony Archibeque	Chair, Gaming Law
Joan Burda	Editor-in-Chief, GP Solo Magazine
Dwight Smith	Chair, House of Delegates Committee
Satnam Singh	Chair, Immigration Law
Ignacio Pinto-Leon	Chair, International Law
Travis Life	Chair, Intellectual Property
Alexander White, Jr.	Chair, Judiciary
J. Patrick Rieder	Vice Chair, Juvenile Law
Abeer Abu Judeh	Chair, Labor, Employment & Civil Rights Law
Justin Silverman	Chair, Law Student Committee

James Schwartz	Chair, Law Trends & Practice E-Newsletter
Jennifer Hilsabeck	Chair, New Lawyer (Column)
Jeffrey Allen	Chair, Leadership Training Committee
Yvette Lloyd	Chair, Legal Educators
William Brown	Chair, Litigation
Laura Farber	Chair, Long Range Planning
Keith McLennan	Chair, Meeting Host Committee
J. Anthony Vittal	Host Chair, Fall Meeting
Alan Fowler	Host Chair, Mid Year Meeting
Richard Evangelista & Chuck Driebe	Host Chairs, Spring Meeting
James Menton and Jeff Allen	Host Chairs, Annual Meeting
Antonio Alvarado	Chair, Membership Board
Brig Gen (ret) Thomas Hemingway	Chair, Military Lawyers
Vicki Levy Eskin	Chair, National Solo & Small Firm Conference
Alan Olson	Chair, Nominating Committee
Robert Zupkus	Chair, Past Chairs Advisory
David Lefton	Chair, Programs Board
David Levesque	Chair, Public Service
Kathleen Hopkins	Chair, Real Estate Law
Bryan Spencer	Chair, Senior Lawyers
Laura Farber	Chair, Solo and Small Firm Lawyer Caucus
Evan Loeffler	Chair, Solo Newsletter
Parag Patel	Chair, Taxation
J. Anthony Vittal	Chair, Technology
Jeffrey Allen	Special Issue Editor, Technology & Practice Guide Board

Julius “Jay” Zxchau	Chair, Title, Conveyancing and Bar Committee
David Tedder	Chair, TCB – Research Task Force
Randi Whitehead	Chair, Tort & Insurance Practice
Valerie Nowottnick	Chair, Urban, State and Local
James Durant	Chair, West Legal Advisory Board
Alexander White Jr.	Chair, Worker’s Compensation
Jennifer Hilsabeck	Chair, Young Lawyers
Jeffrey Solomon	Group Director, Division One, Administration
Jennifer Rymell	Group Director, Division Two, Member Benefits
Elio Martinez	Group Director, Division Three, Practice Specialty
Marilyn Harbur	Group Director, Division Four, practice Setting
Bruce Dorner	Group Director, Special Projects
Bill Hogan	Delegate to the HOD
Sharon Stevens	Delegate to the HOD
Dwight Smith	Delegate to the HOD
Kathleen Hopkins	Division Liaison to the BOG
John Macy	Division Revenue Director
Benes Aldana	Division Secretary
Laura Farber	Division Vice Chair
Joe DeWoskin	Division Chair Elect
H. Stanley Riffle	Division Budget Officer
Robert Zupkus	Division Past Chair
James Durant	Division Chair

Below are just a few highlights from some of the GPSolo esteemed Committee Chairs:

Bruce Dorner-- "Solosez Task Force Leader: "Nearly 3,000 subscribers strong, Solosez continues to be the jewel of the GPSolo Division, as well as its most cost-effective activity, reaching out to solo and small firm lawyers across the planet. The regional Solosez groups continue to expand with regular meetings and increased fellowship. This significantly increases ABA visibility among this market segment, and, with the new dues structure, it is hoped to increase membership."

Gen Thomas Hemingway--"The Military Lawyers Committee focused on developing tuition debt relief policy for Judge Advocates serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. That effort resulted in the approval at the Annual Meeting of Resolution 113 Revised. The Military Law Committee developed tuition debt relief policy for Judge Advocates serving in the U.S. Armed Forces, which was approved at the Mid-Year Meeting by the ABA HOD (Resolution 113 Revised)."

Ryan Albrecht—"The Administrative Law, Young Lawyers, and Legal Education Committees have partnered to sponsor a webinar for Spring 2010, entitled "Career Options in Administrative Law," and it has been approved."

Yvette Lloyd—"The Legal Education Committee is also working on articles on (1) the practical training of paralegals/legal assistants, facilitating the work of solos, (2)work-life balance for new attorneys and law students soon to join the profession."

Justin Silverman—"The Law Student Committee has been focusing on the Division's social media outreach using Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter, in order to increase the Division's presence."

Jennifer Hilsabeck—" The Corporate Counsel Committee is retooling its focus to work more closely with other committees such as the Young Lawyers, as well as Corporate Counsel entities throughout the ABA."

Alexander White—"The Judiciary Committee is liaising with the Judicial Division."

Bryan Spencer—"The Senior Lawyers Committee is working to identify potential members and liaise with the Senior Lawyers Division."

Kathleen Hopkins--Real Estate Committee: Projects & Status: (a) law trends articles - articles submitted and published in first 2 issues of Law Trends, articles presently being solicited for 3rd issue; (b) edit new edition of GP/Solo Book: The Real Estate Closing Desk Book 3ed Ed. - book proposal approved by GP/Solo publications board, contract being prepared by ABA publishing, initial work commenced to local GP/Solo members in each state to update appropriate sections; (c) CLE at annual meeting, in conjunction with Title Guaranty Committee - application has been approved, initial planning meeting conducted on Feb 6.

Marc S. Stern--Bankruptcy Committee: Technical Corrections to the Bankruptcy Reform Act - It is written. We are also going to do Blanket Authority CLE with Tax Section for Annual -- on track.

Kenneth Ashman—"The principal activity we have undertaken in the Business Opportunities & Commercial Law Committee is to produce articles analyzing current issues in the law and/or points for practitioners. Three of the articles have been (or soon will be) reproduced in Law Trends."

Kenneth Vercammen--Elder Law Committee; E-mails to members; NJ program with Jay Foonberg held February 4, 2010; Planning Probate & Elder Law program for Marriott Marquis--February 9-15, Toronto, Ontario Canada Fairmont Royal York -- August 5-10

Jim Schwartz--Law trends: "The Fall edition came out several months ago - the winter edition came out the day before midyear - the production schedule calls for the spring edition just before spring meeting and the annual edition just before the Annual meeting."

Artika Tyner--ADR Committee: ADR Publication in Law Trends (Fall 2009); Partnership established with the Mediation Committee of the Section of Dispute Resolution. Co-sponsorship of CLE/Educational programming; Partnership with Minnesota ADR committees; Membership drive with Minnesota State Bar Association

Parag Patel--Tax Committee; Teleconference for 2010 "Need to Know" tax law developments; Plan Committee meeting at the upcoming ABA Annual meeting on elder and tax planning; Plan Seminar at the upcoming ABA Annual meeting on elder and tax planning.

Travis Life-- Intellectual Property Committee; collecting articles for the GP's publications. A call for articles has gone out but very slow response.

Alexander White--Judiciary Committee; Communicate with Committee members; Communicate with ABA Judicial Division and other ABA judiciary Committees; Co-Sponsor a program with other ABA judiciary Committees; Increase members

Alexander White-- Chair, Worker's Compensation Committee ; Communicate with Committee Members; Communicate with other ABA Workers' Compensation Committees; Co-Sponsor program in 2011 on 100 years of Workers' Compensation; Increase members

In Sum, GPSolo is very busy and very active across a variety of practice settings and practice specialties. We have much work ahead of us, but, at this rate, the 2009/2010

Bar year will be one of GPSolo's greatest! We could not be where we are but for a tremendous staff – HUGE KUDOS to Kim Anderson, Dee Lee, Laura Ramirez, Nicole Nikodem, Rob Salkin, Tom Campbell, Rick Paszkiet, Kelly Keane, MaryAnn Dadisman, and our newest staff member, Katie Lawrence.

See you in St. Thomas and San Francisco!

Respectfully Submitted,

James M. Durant III  
Chair, ABA General Practice, Solo and Small Firm Division