

Message from the Chair

Break Out of Your Office and Flourish in Your Profession!

What does it mean to “practice law”? If you think it’s the job you have, the office you are lucky enough to be sitting in, or the billable hours you have accumulated that reflect your potential for an end of year bonus and partnership, then you are missing the point. I personally know what it is like to carry a load of debt from an educational investment while struggling to raise a young family, so I am not dismissing the importance of having steady employment and a sense of financial stability so you can cross the finish line—at least with respect to paying off burdensome school loans.

But practicing law is a profession. Never lose sight of that and what it means. You have to plant roots so you can grow in this profession, just like you plant roots in your community. Think about that—how are you planting roots in our profession?

This year, the Trial Lawyers Section of the New York State Bar Association held its annual summer meeting and continuing education event in Hershey, PA. As Section Chair, I was happy to join other litigators and not only earn CLE credits for a few hours each morning, but also connect with litigators both outside and inside my own firm and find out what is on their minds.

I want to know what they see from their vantage points throughout our state. What experiences have they had in courts in different parts of our state that concern them or that have inspired them? How have they addressed discovery issues in an ever evolving complex technologically centered world? What legislative initiatives have grabbed their attention and how should members of our profession respond in their view? Our bar association and our connection to our Section provide a great opportunity to break out of the office and connect with others on a wide range of subjects that affect all of us, as well as the future of our profession and society as a whole. The ultimate experience for a true professional is to contribute to the advancement of our society as a whole through active and meaningful engagement in our own profession.

Our recent trip to Hershey, Pennsylvania, was infused with a powerful educational component. Professor Patrick Connors, who is an authority on New York civil practice, provided updates on civil practice and ethics that alone were worth the expense of a trip to this beautiful venue.

In addition, our CLE program included valuable information on the use of the internet during jury selection and how courts and lawyers on both sides of civil cases

are employing social media in the courtroom. Robert Gibson provided this presentation and it was an eye-opener that led to a discussion about ethical concerns among attendees.

Insight on appellate practice was provided by the Hon. Victoria Graffeo, Seth Weinberg and Jacqueline Mouquin.



Noreen DeWire Grimmick

I was invited to speak on employment law issues that employers in our own profession need to be mindful of. Again, this topic brought about a good deal of discussion among attendees both inside and outside of class.

The attorneys who came to our summer event enjoyed family time with their children, spouses, significant others and friends on the beautiful grounds of Hotel Hershey and surrounding areas. Having participated in the Trial Lawyers Section for a number of years now, the camaraderie I have with members of this Section across the state has enriched my professional and personal life.

We also hosted a networking event that took place at the New York State Bar Association in Albany on the evening of October 13, 2017, followed the next morning by a CLE at Albany Law School on the topic of depositions.

Currently taking place are the 2017 Deposition Boot Camps, co-sponsored by the Trial Lawyers Section and the Committee on Continuing Legal Education. This program is being held in multiple locations into early December.

Section member or not—if you are a litigator or even “dabble” in litigation—please join us at Section events. We value your participation and contribution. Grab onto the opportunity to break out of your office and plant some roots in your profession! There will be more events scheduled soon—so stay tuned!