

**Pathway to the
Profession:**

**From Law School
to Lawyer**

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Foreword



On behalf of myself and the 75,000 members of the New York State Bar Association—Congratulations! You’ve made it through law school, and in a few short months you will join the ranks of attorneys licensed to practice in New York. This is an honor and a privilege, and we welcome your entry into the profession. And we want you to know that the New York State Bar Association will be with you at every step in your career.

The NYSBA is a professional association dedicated to helping attorneys hone their skills as lawyers and develop as members of a noble profession. The NYSBA offers educational and networking opportunities, free and low-cost legal research plans, and practice-oriented reference materials. Membership in the NYSBA puts you in contact with colleagues and mentors who will help you stand out from the crowd and have a well-rounded approach to the profession.

The NYSBA’s mission includes cultivating the science of jurisprudence; elevating the standard of integrity, honor, professional skill and courtesy in the legal profession; and cherishing and fostering a spirit of collegiality among its members. It is these core values that brought about the *Pathway to the Profession* program. *Pathway* is founded on the belief that if current attorneys help the next generation of attorneys, the practice of law will be better—and more fulfilling—for all. It was developed to provide support to law schools and students, and to help new attorneys transition into practice. *Pathway*’s tailored programs are designed to complement existing curriculum and create new opportunities for ongoing academic experience and exposure.

Aside from *Pathway*, one of the key ways to ensure your success as a new attorney—and to elevate standards and foster collegiality—is to become involved in one or more of the NYSBA’s practice-specific Sections or Committees, as well as the Young Lawyers Section. Speaking from my own experience, NYSBA membership proved invaluable after I graduated from law school. The Bar Association not only offered educational programs, relevant resources and benefits, but also—particularly through Section and Committee membership—an introduction to New York’s leading attorneys, both in and outside of my area of practice. Many of them started as valued contacts, but became lifelong friends. NYSBA gave me the opportunity to work not only with the finest attorneys in New York State but with some of the finest people I would ever know. Involvement in the organized bar made me realize every day that

being an attorney *is* a noble profession, one that serves the public good, and one that is both rewarding and satisfying. Getting involved in the bar will help you keep your passion for the law, and the justice system, alive and burning bright.

In that vein, I'd like to share some advice: Demonstrate hard work and diligence in all you do. Understand the culture of your work environment, learn who the players are, and emulate those who deserve your respect and admiration. Be nice to the administrative, technical and paralegal staff because they will save you time and time again. Be involved and approach all your work with enthusiasm. Your attitude and appearance will matter. Work on a variety of projects, as many as you can get your hands on. You might discover an interest in an area you didn't expect. If you want to be successful, do everything to the best of your ability; others are watching and taking note. Love what you do and believe in what you are doing.

That said, we offer you *Pathway to the Profession: From Law School to Lawyer*, a compilation of substantive materials on topics such as legal writing and legal research, motion practice, attorney professionalism, and marketing; all this to help make your transition from student to professional as seamless as possible. The materials are culled from the NYSBA's extensive archive of articles on these topics. We hope you find them useful and informative.

In law school, one learns about the law, but not necessarily how to practice. So, consider this a guide book to the practice of law. New York practice and New York law remain the gold standard for lawyers throughout the world, and the NYSBA and I want to ensure that, after graduation, you have all the tools you need at your disposal to become a successful member of the New York legal community. And, as always, the New York State Bar Association and its 120-member staff are here to help you achieve that success.

On behalf of the NYSBA's 75,000 members, once again, I congratulate you and welcome you to the New York State Bar Association.

David P. Miranda
President
New York State Bar Association
2015–2016

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