

Priorities for 2014

As we enter a new year, we continue work on our ongoing initiatives even as we have taken on new priorities. Our theme this year is "Serving the Profession, Serving the Public," and we are advancing that mission through various projects, including our continuing focus on legal education. The 2014 Presidential Summit at the Annual Meeting will feature panels on legal education and the future of the profession, and in the spring, we plan to bring stakeholders together to discuss these important issues. In addition, the Executive Committee recently adopted legislative priorities for 2014, reaffirming our commitment in a number of areas and adding some important new legislative initiatives to our slate of top priorities.

Presidential Summit

The Presidential Summit is scheduled for Wednesday, January 29, at 2:00 p.m. at our Annual Meeting in New York City. The Summit is the only plenary panel of the week, offering a three-hour CLE program free of charge to all Annual Meeting registrants. The first panel, titled "Educating Tomorrow's Lawyers," will bring together representatives from the judiciary, the practicing bar and law schools to discuss the rapid and dramatic changes that have taken place both in legal education and the job market in recent years. Our panelists will discuss possible strategies to address the cost of legal education, the extent to which curriculum prepares students for the practice

of law, the need for greater diversity in the legal profession, and other important issues. Our second panel, "Supporting Today's Lawyers," will focus on the challenges and changes faced by practicing attorneys, including developments in the provision of law-related services, new technology, increased globalization, a changing economic climate and new client demands. We are pleased that the Founding Director of Educating Tomorrow's Lawyers, William Sullivan, will be delivering our keynote address on legal education, and noted strategic planning consultant Bruce MacEwen will serve as keynote speaker for our second panel on the future of the profession. They will be joined by terrific panelists for a lively discussion of these important issues.

2014 Legislative Priorities

At our November meeting, the Association's Executive Committee adopted state and federal legislative priorities for 2014. We will continue our commitment to the integrity of the justice system in New York State and at the federal level, and we will continue to advocate for adequate funding for the judiciary and civil legal services for the poor and to turn back the devastating impact of sequestration on the judicial branch of the federal government. We will also continue our support for sealing records of conviction of certain crimes; reforms to prevent wrongful convictions; the Rules Enabling Act rule-making process and maintenance of Rule 11 of the Federal Rules of



Civil Procedure; state regulation of the tort system; repealing Section 2 of the Defense of Marriage Act; and measures that support the legal profession and judicial independence.

New legislative priorities we have adopted include:

- Creating additional Family Court judgeships throughout New York State to ensure justice for New York's children and families and to ease the burden on existing Family Court judges, as recommended by our Task Force on Family Courts.
- Expanding veterans treatment courts in New York State. These courts have been established in communities throughout New York to help deal constructively with veterans who have become involved in the court system, as discussed in the report of our Committee on Veterans.
- Lessening the use of solitary confinement in New York's correctional system, per the report and recommendation of our Committee on Civil Rights.
- Supporting increased voter participation through reforms at the state and federal levels, as set

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

forth by the Special Committee on Voter Participation.

- Promoting civics education in New York's schools.
- Addressing the crisis in immigration representation and the need for a statutory right to appointed counsel in immigration proceed-

ings for children and persons who are not legally competent.

- Amending New York's Franchise Act to conform to Federal Trade Commission rules.

We appreciate all of the proposals put forth by our sections and committees, and are proud to have sub-

stantial and well-developed legislative priorities for the coming year. You can learn more about our legislative priorities by visiting <http://www.nysba.org/2014LPDescriptions/>. I hope to see many of you at our Annual Meeting and the Presidential Summit. ■



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