



DADE COUNTY
BAR ASSOCIATION

THE Bulletin

"A Century of Service to Miami-Dade"

123 N.W. First Avenue Miami, Florida 33128 / www.dadecountybar.org / March 2011

DCBA FEATURED EVENTS

(For more information go to www.dadecountybar.org)

03/08	6:00-9:00 DCBA Social Mixer - John Martin's Irish Pub & Restaurant
03/12	9:00 a.m. YLS Softball Tournament- Tropical Park
03/28	12:00-1:30 Workers Compensation Seminar - Lawson E. Thomas Courthouse Center



STEVEN W. DAVIS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**If we are to keep our democracy,
there must be one commandment—
Thou shalt not ration justice.
Judge Learned Hand**

This commandment resonates today even more than in 1951 when The Honorable Learned Hand, Chief Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, delivered these powerful words. Today's legislatures must be required to meet this commandment's intent and guarantee our freedoms are protected by properly funding our justice system. The Florida legislature will be addressing budget issues for Florida's courts. Certainly our state's budget must be carefully managed but any consideration of the courts' budget should make sure that the justice system is sustained to protect all Floridians. Lack of funding has caused delays in many routine services such as electronic filing that is nearly a decade old in the federal courts. More significantly, the cuts have grown each year and have caused reduced support staff, lower salaries for judges, and reduction in retirement benefits. These cuts are well documented and the ever eroding share of the state budget that the third branch of state government receives. The DCBA will update you as the budget process unfolds and will inform you on the issues. With a new administration facing major deficits it is more important than ever, that we emphasize the vital function of the justice system so that all Floridians have access to the courts.

Fortunately there is one resource that cannot be cut and that is the talent and energy our judges apply to our justice system. DCBA attorneys can count on is the hard work and energy of the judges of this circuit who make sure justice is preserved and not rationed in Miami-Dade County. This past year I have seen first hand the tremendous dedication that our judges have for our justice system and how much they care about making sure that the litigants and the attorneys know that their cases were given deliberate and careful consideration. To honor these efforts the DCBA's March luncheon will honor the judiciary. Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals Judge Rosemary Barkett will be our featured speaker. She is a former Circuit Court judge (and Chief Judge) and Florida Supreme Court Justice. In addition former DCBA President Neal Sonnet will discuss the independence of the judiciary and our responsibility to make sure we, as attorneys, are doing all we can to protect our judges ability to dispense justice. The importance of this message cannot be understated and we hope you plan to attend our March 30 luncheon to show your support for our judges.

Many judges reach this position by appointment and on March 2 we are delighted to be offering a two hour discussion with members of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission (JNC) and two recent circuit court appointees (Judge Beth Bloom and Judge Darrin Gayles). This event, which is co-sponsored by many other Voluntary bar associations in Miami, will share some insight into the appointment process as the JNC searches for qualified future judges. After all finding good judges is a necessary step in following Judge Hand's commandment.

March General Membership Luncheon

The Honorable Rosemary Barkett

Judge, United States Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit



Special Guests

Chief Judge Joel Brown

and the

Judiciary of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit of Florida

Special Presentation by

Neal Sonnett, Esq.

Past President, American Judicature Society
Chair, AJS Task Force on Judicial Independence

March 30, 2011 -- 11:30 am to 1:30 pm

InterContinental Hotel
100 Chopin Plaza, Miami, Florida

THE 6 STEPS TO BUILDING A STRONG REFERRAL BASE

by Paula Black

And it can start at the DCBA.

Building a referral base – we all know we need to do it...but how many of you focus on it? I mean really focus on it. Not just engage in a conversation with someone because you saw them at lunch. We're talking about thinking and planning with deliberate strategy!

As lawyers, building a referral base is the single most important business development activity you can engage in. If nurtured and cared for, a well-built referral base can feed your practice business for years to come. It can truly become your best return on investment. Now, what do you need to invest? Here are six things to consider.

1. Answer the "WHO" Question?

Analyze who could be great resources. Are they other lawyers who don't practice in your area of the law, or practice in an area that complements yours? Are they business leaders who face legal issues (or work with those who face legal issues) that relate to your practice area? Are they larger firms that are unable to take the case for a variety of reasons (Doesn't generate enough revenue? Conflicts with other cases?) Are they influencers that interact with large numbers of potential clients on a regular basis? All of these are questions to ask yourself as you begin to build your base.

2. Location, Location, Location.

So where could you find these types of people? There are three main places you'll most likely find strong potential referral sources:

1. Legal communities (Yes, the DCBA is a great place to start.)
2. Business communities
3. Your personal community

Working with other lawyers is a great way to build—and share—referral sources. Use the DCBA and other associations to make connections with lawyers who work outside your field of expertise and figure out ways to send each other business. Even better. Be a part of the seminar that I give at the DCBA that has a networking group that gets together on a regular basis to understand what types of business the other members are looking for...then send each other clients. When it comes to the business community, it's never a bad idea to plant the seeds of referrals with clients or business associates who work with people who may need your help. You won't get any referrals if you don't ask for them. Speaking of which... be sure your close friends and family understand the kind of cases you are looking for—they can be your best sources. Finally, think outside the box. Everyone from parents at your children's school to acquaintances from your house of worship can be great sources for referrals if you keep that idea at top of mind.

3. Think Big.

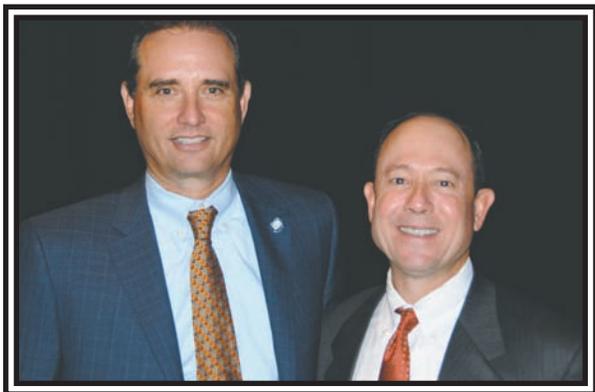
Now that you've begun to understand who to look for and where to look, sit down and make a list. Dig deep and brain storm... think outside the box! I bet when you start to make your list you will think of people you haven't thought of in a long time. Reach out to them! Think of "dream" referral sources... you don't have to know them. In this town it's easy enough to find people who can make an introduction to the people you want to know.

4. Develop Meaningful Relationships.

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GENERAL MEMBERSHIP LUNCHEON

On Thursday, January 13, 2011 the Dade County Bar Association hosted its monthly general membership luncheon at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. This month's luncheon theme was *People Who Make a Difference* and featured guest speakers Scott Hiaasen, Investigative Reporter with the Miami Herald and Alan Sakowitz, Esq, author of *Miles Away...Worlds Apart*. The luncheon was co-sponsored by the Miami-Dade Justice Association.



Steven Davis, President DCBA and Scott G. Hawkins, President-Elect - The Florida Bar



Scott Hiaasen and Robert Fiore, Past President DCBA



Dennis Kainen, Past President DCBA and Alan Sakowitz



Daniel Damson, Elliot Kula, Bart Chipnik and William Aaron, Past President DCBA



Scott Wagner, Richard Shane, Andrea Gonzalez and William K. Hill



Paul Siegel, Debra Cohen, Issac Jaroslawicz and Shoshona Krars



Debra Goodstone Weiss and David Young



Carlos Martinez, Miami-Dade Public Defender and Leslie Lott, The Florida Bar Board of Governor



Steve Simeonidis and Markenzky LaPointe



Debra Cohen and Cheryl Linton Robinson, President Gwen S. Cherry Black Women Lawyers Association

PARALEGAL MEMBERSHIP IN LOCAL BAR ASSOCIATIONS

by Linda McGrath-Cruz, FRP, ACP

The American Bar Association endorsed the use of paralegals in 1967. Since then, the paralegal profession as a whole has struggled to advance its position and to gain a much deserved level of professionalism and respect in the legal community. It is an exciting time for paralegals in Florida. Many of us have been able to take huge steps forward in our careers. There are opportunities today that were not available to us even five years ago, such as the opportunity to become a Florida Registered Paralegal with The Florida Bar and to become an active member of our local bar associations.

The Dade County Bar Association (DCBA) was founded in 1920. In 2009 it started accepting paralegal members, giving them the same opportunities as attorney members. We paralegals take great pride and feel much accomplishment in becoming a part of an organization which has been around for almost over a century. Joining the DCBA is a dynamic way to highlight our accomplishments and professionalism and to make an investment in our future.

There are several key benefits available to paralegals who join their local bar associations. One of those benefits is the ease of access to a frequent and varied assortment of educational events. While there is always the necessity to reach particular CLE goals, attorneys and paralegals alike should strive to further their education at every opportunity. Through attendance at educational events, paralegals can enjoy the camaraderie of fellow paralegals and learn from their personal and professional experiences, as well as gain valuable insight from the attorneys, judges, administrators and other legal professionals within the community. Paralegals who join their local bar association reach a certain level of professionalism, not only by meeting fellow paralegals, but also by learning from high quality educational speakers and by interacting with community leaders.

Another significant benefit is networking. Networking is one of the best ways to help a paralegal land his or her dream job. It is a much better method of job-seeking than cold calling or browsing the classified advertisements. Even if not in the market for a new job, it may be surprising at how networking can grow one's career. Networking enables interaction with others in similar fields, awareness of current events, changes in paralegal regulations, laws and court procedures, educational opportunities, and much more. But to obtain these benefits, one must get out, get involved, and become more than a nameless face in the paralegal crowd.

Paralegals need to join their local bar association and support their local legal community. Paralegals need to seize this rich opportunity by becoming proactive in promoting their firms and their own individual capabilities. The rewards are too great to pass up, so join now!

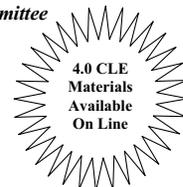
* Linda McGrath Cruz is a Florida Registered Paralegal with the law firm of Arnstein & Lehr LLP. She can be reached at 305-753-2443 or lmc@miamifrp.com.



PROBATE & GUARDIANSHIP A View from the Bench and Bar

March 11, 2011

Sponsored by the DCBA Probate & Guardianship Committee
DCBA Young Lawyers Section
&
Legal Aid / Put Something Back



Faculty
Distinguished Members of the Probate Bench
Luis Barreto, Esq.
Elizabeth Hubbard, Esq.
Rosa T. Romero, Esq.
Candis Trusty, Esq.
J. Eric Virgil, Esq.
Enrique Zamora, Esq.

When: Friday, March 11, 2011 **Where:** Dade County Courthouse
73 W. Flagler Street
Miami, Florida 33130
Courtroom TBA

Time: Registration 8:30 a.m.
Seminar 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

CLE: 4.0 credits applied for, including .5 Ethics.

Cost: FREE for all attorneys who agree to accept at least one pro bono probate or guardianship case from Put Something Back. If you cannot accept a case, the cost is \$80.00.

Materials will become available at www.DadeCountyProBono.org (we are going green, and will no longer be providing materials at the seminar, they will only be available on line the week prior to the seminar.)

-----Cut-Along-Dotted-Line-----
Name _____ Bar Number _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Firm _____ Email _____ Telephone _____

I will attend and accept at least one pro bono case.
 I will attend. Enclosed is my check for \$_____ (\$80.00) made payable to Legal Aid/PSB.

Return to: Put Something Back 123 N.W. 1 Ave. Miami, FL 33128
Ph: (305) 579-5733 Ext. 2252 Fax: (305) 372-7693
Email: psb@dadelegalaid.org

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TO REGISTER ON -LINE: www.DadeCountyProBono.org **MAIL:** Completed form with check (see address above) **FAX:** Completed form to 305-372-7693