

Two Items needing your attention now:

Those of you who are members of the Virginia State Bar Family Law Section should have received the following survey regarding Alternative Dispute Resolution in family law cases. The survey is being used as part of the consideration on whether to make mediation mandatory for family law cases. Unfortunately, the survey did not list Collaborative Practice as one of the listed alternatives to traditional litigation. Accordingly, we encourage all our attorney members to respond to this survey and if applicable, specifically note collaborative practice in response to questions 3, 7, and 8. We also suggest that you list the number of cases you have handled collaboratively and through other forms of ADR in question 4. In addition, if you believe that passage of the Uniform Collaborative Law Act would positively impact ADR in family law cases in Virginia, we encourage you to note that in response to Question 10.

We will be following up to encourage the Family Law Section to include collaborative practice in future initiatives but in the meantime, please take a few minutes to respond to the survey and return it.

Information

In August 2014 VaCP Council targeted three goals for our organization:

- Marketing Collaborative Practice
- Member integration into and acceptance by professional communities
- Member welcome and retention in practice groups

These goals fit snugly into the VaCP mission to support local practice groups in developing competent and effective practitioners *as leaders*. Council reiterated our commitment to promote Collaborative Practice as an influential factor in regional and global peace-building.

Since August we have established a marketing committee and have begun planning an annual meeting around this topic. Getting the word out to the public is critical.

Equally critical is acknowledging our professional responsibility to integrate collaborative learning and passion into our professional organizations. Council has formed a special committee to monitor such opportunities to serve. We strongly encourage all of our members to become involved in professional organizations outside of collaborative practice and to bring the skills and spirit of what we do to those organizations as part of our larger outreach efforts. Our most immediate focus right now is on the Virginia State Bar committees and boards.

With more awareness throughout the Commonwealth through marketing initiatives and more presence and passion for collaboration throughout our communities, member welcome and retention in local practice groups will be supported by growing client demand and recognition of the benefits of collaboration for clients and professionals alike.

Ideas

Step up and volunteer for membership on a professional committee or board by February 27, 2015. Three-year terms start July 1.

We need your involvement. Specifically, the Virginia State Bar is filling vacancies on boards and committees. We ask you to consider nominating yourself or a collaborative colleague for the following:

- Board of Governors of the Family Law Section
- MCLE Board
- Legal Ethics
- Access to Legal Services
- Professionalism

Just submit the short Committee Preference form and resume on the VSB site.

Consider nominating collaborative movers and shakers for statewide recognition through the Betty Ann Thompson Lifetime Achievement Award or the Family Law Service Award or the R. Edwin Burnette, Jr. Young Lawyer of the Year Award. Recognize excellence in our colleagues and celebrate our achievements.

Contact kimberlyfauss@newgrowthventures.com for VaCP encouragement and assistance.