


“LET’S TALK” CLE SERIES IS GROWING IN POPULARITY

The Bench, Bar and Community Subcommittee of the Mecklenburg County Bar’s Diversity & Inclusion Committee; MCB Young Lawyers’ Division (YLD); MCB Family Law Section; and the Charlotte Women’s Bar partnered on the third of a four-part “Let’s Talk” CLE series. Let’s Talk Family brought members of the Bench and Bar together to discuss codes of professional conduct and best practices in the courtroom on Mar. 8, 2013.

Eight judges sat on a panel which produced a substantive discourse between the Bench and Bar. The judges’ panel, moderated by Hon. Rickye McKoy-Mitchell, included: Hon. Charlotte Brown, Hon. Ronald L. Chapman, Hon. Jena P. Culler, Hon. Gary L. Henderson, Hon. Christy T. Mann and Hon. Paige B. McThenia. Chair and Vice Chair of the MCB’s Family Section, Allison P. Holstein and Ronald A. Skufca sought questions in advance from MCB Family Law Section members.

One of the many positive take-aways from this CLE came from Hon. Jena Culler. Her advice was plain and simple and appreciated by the other judges, “Please say your name and introduce yourself to the judges in court. It doesn’t matter if I’ve known you for 20 years. Set the example for the newer attorneys to follow. Reach back to your earlier days of practice so the newer attorneys can model how it should be done.”

It’s not too early to register for the last in the Let’s Talk CLE series. Let’s Talk Criminal will be held on Friday, June 7, 2013 featuring United States Magistrate Judge David C. Keesler. Registration available on www.MeckBar.org. The MCB YLD has committed to provide scholarships for this series. If you would like to apply, please contact MCB Diversity Coordinator Jasmine Hines at jhines@meckbar.org or 704/375-8624. 

APEX MENTORING PROGRAM

An Organic Approach to Mentoring

By DeeDee Lott and Luis M. Lluberas

DeeDee Lott of Compass Group USA, Inc. and Luis M. Lluberas of Moore & Van Allen are participants in the MCB Apex Mentoring program. Apex, now in its second year, is designed to encourage and support the ascension of minority attorneys to senior positions within Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s law firms. The program matches minority associates from law firms who have been in practice between three to seven years with tenured in-house counsel from a law department, specifically within firm and legal department signatories to the MCB’s Diversity and Inclusion Committee’s Call to Action.

DeeDee and Luis get together on a monthly basis to get to know each other better on a personal level while discussing varied topics, including insights into the practice of law and how to balance a vibrant, demanding professional career with the joys of family life. This has allowed DeeDee, a female litigator of Filipino descent, and Luis, a male bankruptcy attorney of Puerto Rican descent, to highlight their diverse backgrounds and build a substantive mentoring relationship.

DeeDee and Luis have both enjoyed their relationship and would like it to endure well past the formal end of this year’s Apex program. With that objective in mind, they have let their mentor-mentee relationship

grow organically and without specific “task based” goals. For Luis, the organic approach is vital since his belief is that “a mentoring relationship blossoms when you get to know the experiences underpinning the other person’s opinions and advice.” As DeeDee stated, “I think we both learn from each other as we share our insights and experiences. It helps that our conversations come so naturally.” For both of them, a gradual approach to their mentor-mentee relationship has revealed that their personalities and backgrounds provide excellent fodder for discussion topics that ultimately highlight their common interests and work ethics. DeeDee and Luis agree that, as Luis puts it, “I didn’t think that I would gain so much insight from a mentor with such a dissimilar background, but that initial assumption could not have been more off cue.”

The current Apex class includes 26 participants from 13 signatory organizations: Alston & Bird LLP; Bank of America; Compass Group USA, Inc.; Duke Energy Corporation; King & Spalding LLP; McGuireWoods LLP; Moore & Van Allen PLLC; Parker Poe Adams & Bernstein LLP; Robinson, Bradshaw & Hinson, P.A.; Wells Fargo & Company; Winston & Strawn LLP; and Womble Carlyle Sandridge & Rice, LLP.



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