

Leo Bearman Sr. American Inn of Court Mentoring Program

American Inns of Court Model Mentoring Program

The American Inns of Court has formulated a model mentoring program that can be adapted to meet the needs of particular Inns. For the 2019-2020 program year, the Leo Bearman, Sr. American Inn of Court will establish a Mentoring Program based on this model.

Purpose of the Mentoring Program

The purpose of American Inns of Court Mentoring Program is to cultivate professional excellence in support of the American Inns of Court's goal of fostering excellence in professionalism, ethics, civility, and legal skills. Inn mentoring will assist members in developing high standards of professionalism based upon internalized principles of appropriate behavior consistent with the legal professions' core values.

Principles of Inn Mentoring

In keeping with the Professional Creed's goals of upholding "the highest standards of excellence in professionalism, ethics, civility, and legal skills" and attaining "the highest level of knowledge and skills" in every members' practice area, the following will govern the Leo Bearman, Sr. American Inn of Court Mentoring Program:

- All Pupils and Associates in the Inn shall participate as protégés/mentees in the Mentoring Program; mentors will be drawn from the Inn's Emeritus members, Masters, and Barristers.
- Inn mentoring should:
 - Develop an understanding of generally accepted professional values and standards of behavior and the importance of professionalism in the practice of law.
 - Build awareness of ethical obligations and of proper practices for avoiding mishandling of other's assets, conflicts of interest, neglect of matters, and civil liability problems.
 - Improve professional skills necessary for the effective practice of law at a high level of competence.
 - Develop an appreciation of the importance of supporting and improving the justice system, improving access to justice and the importance of active involvement in the profession and the community.

Operation of Mentoring Program

- *Oversight.* A Mentoring Program Chairperson will oversee the operation of the Mentoring Program.
- *Selection of Pairings.* Proteges/mentees and mentors will be paired as promptly as possible after the start of the Inn's program year. In matching protégés/mentees and mentors, the Mentoring Program Chairperson should take into consideration areas of practice, common interest and other relevant factors which will facilitate a successful mentoring experience.
- *Mentoring Cycle.* Each mentoring cycle lasts for the duration of one Inn program year.

- *Frequency of meetings.* Each protégé/mentee should have at least four to five contacts with mentors during the Mentoring Program year, either in mentor-protégé/mentee pair meetings or group activities with other members of the Inn.
- *Length of meetings.* Normally, mentor-protégé/mentee meetings, whether in groups or with individual mentors and protégés/mentees, should last at least one hour.
- *Mentoring topics.* All mentoring, to the extent reasonable, should address professionalism. Professionalism includes:
 - High competence in legal skills.
 - Adherence to ethical obligations
 - An appreciation of the importance of civility and professional demeanor in all dealings.
 - The importance of pro bono representation and access to justice issues.
 - The importance of participation in bar organizations at the local, state and national levels.
 - The transmission of professional values and standards to less experienced members of the legal profession.
 - Balancing self-interest with the interests of clients, the justice system and the public interest.

Sample Format and Schedule for Inn Mentoring

- Session One Mentoring Program Activity: kickoff event for Mentoring Program planned by Executive Committee
- Session Two Individual Session: One on one meeting between individual mentors and protégés/mentees.
- Session Three Group Activity: group participation in Inn events and/or group activity with other pairings
- Session Four Group Activity: group participation in Inn events and/or group activity with other pairings
- Session Five Individual Session: One on one meeting between individual mentors and protégés/mentees. Closing conversation to discuss any final issues.

Accountability & Evaluation

Each Inn team will provide two short progress reports, one mid-year and one at the end of the program year, on the progress of the team members' participation in the Mentoring Program. Additionally, mentors are encouraged to report successful sessions quarterly to the Mentoring Program Chairperson, which may be highlighted at Inn meetings.

At the end of the year, the Mentoring Program Chairperson will conduct an evaluation of the Inn's Mentoring Program, seeking input from mentors and protégés/mentees and using information from team reports. The results of the evaluation should serve as a means for continually improving the Inn's Mentoring Program and will be reported to the Executive Committee.