

Around the Water Cooler

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It's Not Just Another Mentoring Program, Part 3

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The John Marshall Law School's Lawyer-to-Lawyer Mentoring Program began in 2011 in collaboration with the Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Professionalism, matching practicing alumni with recent graduates. Over the past two years, we've received a tremendous amount of feedback and support from the mentors and the mentees. We put that feedback to work, expanding the program dramatically and focusing on those issues of professionalism that affect all developing attorneys, while still

leaving room for the mentors and mentees to create a unique relationship.

My first post gave a bit of the background behind the Lawyer-to-Lawyer Mentoring Program as well as offering the insights of Karen J. Dimond, a Cook County assistant state's attorney. In "It's Not Just Another Mentoring Program, Part 2" Barry A. Kozak, an adjunct faculty member at John Marshall and the director of our Elder Law Programs, shared his thoughts. In this final post, we'll hear the perspectives of two John Marshall alums working in the private sector.

Jeanine M. Cunningham & David M. Bickel

Jeanine M. Cunningham has practiced law in the areas of estate planning, probate, elder law and tax law for over 20 years. She has earned both her J.D. and LL.M. in Taxation from John Marshall. Cunningham is the past president of the North Suburban Bar Association and past chairwoman of the Probate Practice Committee of The Chicago Bar Association. She shared the following thoughts about her mentoring experience:

"I believe that mentoring is exposing new attorneys to the reality of practicing law. There is a gap between the theory taught in law school and the reality of practicing law. A mentor can guide the mentee in the right direction and expose him/her to all that is

encompassed in practicing law. It is important for our profession to work together as attorneys, regardless of the level of experience, so that the clients are given the best of services."

David M. Bickel earned a J.D. and both his LL.M. in Real Estate and LL.M. in International Business and Trade Law from John Marshall. He is a solo practitioner in the Chicago area focusing on criminal defense, traffic and DUI law. He described his experience with mentoring as follows:

"I had no idea I would personally and professionally benefit so much from John Marshall's mentoring program. One-on-one meetings with my mentee have taught me to communicate more effectively and to evaluate areas of my own practice and procedures that need improvement. The satisfaction I get from mentoring a new lawyer is immeasurable. The program exceeded my expectations. It is the most interactive way to give back to the John Marshall community and give new lawyers a stronger sense of confidence. The satisfaction you will get by being a mentor is fantastic and cannot be measured by CLE credits. I strongly recommend participating as a mentor for your own personal and professional growth."

To view parts 1 and 2 of "It's Not Just Another Mentoring Program," go to <http://professionalism.jmls.edu/>. Frossard's next blog will feature a discussion with a recent graduate who found a job and is reporting on his experience in the "real world."