

RIVERSIDE LAWYER

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MAGAZINE

Starting Your Own Practice

In This Issue:

Welcome to Our Noble Profession

Deposition Etiquette

Law and Motion 101

Managing a Small Law Firm

Tips for New Admittees on Court Appearances



The official publication of the Riverside County Bar Association

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LEO A. DEEGAN INN OF COURT

by Robyn A. Lewis

The 2008-2009 program year for the Leo A. Deegan Inn of Court was an exciting one. Under the leadership of its President, the Honorable Stephen Larson, the Inn focused on various aspects of trial, with each team assigned to present a program on a different aspect of trial preparation and mechanics. The Inn was also proud to participate in the programs held for the female attorneys from Afghanistan when they came to Riverside in January of 2009.

The Leo A. Deegan Inn of Court is a professional organization, comprised of attorneys and judicial officers, which is organized under the American Inns of Court. The organization focuses on improving the skills and professionalism of the bench and the bar. Each month, the members get together at a dinner meeting, during which programs are held that focus on matters of ethics, skills and professionalism. Membership is by invitation only. Applications for membership are considered each summer and result in invitations for new membership for the upcoming year.

The Inn was named for the Honorable Leo A. Deegan, a legend of the Riverside legal community. Judge Deegan first began practicing in Riverside in 1946 as a member of the district attorney's office. After also serving in the county counsel's office, he became the City Attorney for Riverside in 1958. He was appointed to the bench by Governor Edmund Brown in 1959. He served on the superior court until his retirement in 1975. In the late 1980's, he served for 14 months on the Court of Appeal for the Third Appellate District in Sacramento.

Each year, the Leo A. Deegan Inn of Court recognizes both an attorney and a judicial officer for their outstanding contributions to the legal community as well as for their professional accomplishments. The 2008-2009 recipient of the Terry A. Bridges Outstanding Attorney Award was John Porter, a partner in the law firm of Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard & Smith. Mr. Porter's career, which has spanned over 30 years, has focused on the defense of police officers and police departments against allegations of false arrest, false imprisonment, civil rights violations, excessive force, and other police misconduct.

The Inn bestowed the Elwood Rich Outstanding Jurist of the Year Award on the Honorable Richard Fields, particularly for his accomplishments as presiding judge in Riverside during what has been truly a crisis. In addition to sitting as presiding judge from January of 2007 until January of 2009, Judge Fields has presided as a Riverside Superior Court judge and commissioner for over 15 years. Additionally, he served as chair of the court's Drug Court Oversight Committee and as a drug court judge.

The Inn's membership votes annually on its favorite presentation, and an award is given to that team. The 2008-2009

award for best Team Presentation went to Team Marshall, named after Jack Marshall of Thompson & Colegate, for its presentation on mediation. Team members included the Honorable Oswald Parada, Randy Stamen, Neil Okazaki, Jeremy Hanson, Audrey Owens, Sharon Hodges, Chris Oliver and Tarek Shawky.

This year, the Inn is focusing on exploring controversial topics, such as jury nullification and attorney fees. The Inn is headed by President Jeff Van Wagenen, with the Honorable David Bristow, Jeb Brown, Chris Harmon, Robyn Lewis, Chris Oliver, Chad Firetag, and John Michels serving as Executive Board members.

The Inn is excited to have students from the University of La Verne School of Law participating as team members this year. The students were selected by Dean Allen Easley. This is the first time that the Inn has extended invitations to student members.

For more information on the Leo A. Deegan Inn of Court, please contact Sherri Gomez, Executive Director, at sherri.gomez@gmail.com or Robyn Lewis at rlewislaw@yahoo.com.

Robyn A. Lewis is with J. Lewis & Associates, APLC. She is Vice President of the Riverside County Bar Association and Vice President of the Leo A. Deegan Inn of Court.



Jeff Van Wagenen



Team Marshall – Audrey Owens (holding award), Randy Stamen, Jeremy Hanson, Chris Oliver, Tarek Shawky

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