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Center for Law, the Legal Profession, and Public Policy

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CENTER FOR LAW, THE LEGAL PROFESSION, et al.: Center for Law, the Legal Profession, and Public Policy AND PUBLIC POLICY

I. GOVERNANCE

The University of South Carolina School of Law (the "Law School") created the Center for Law, the Legal Profession, and Public Policy in July, 1991, after receiving a substantial grant from the South Carolina Bar Foundation. The Center operates pursuant to bylaws adopted by the Law School faculty. A nine-member faculty Governing Board establishes Center policy and oversees the Center's staff and its activities. Professor Nathan M. Crystal is Director of the Center. Ms. Pamela D. Robinson is Assistant Director of the Center and administers the Center's Voluntary Pro Bono Program. Professor Robert M. Wilcox is the Chair of the Center's Governing Board.

II. ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

The academic mission of the Center, as defined by the Governing Board, is:

to sponsor teaching and research, both empirical and traditional, about subjects of current and emerging importance concerning the legal profession and its role in society.

The Center's Governing Board established as a first area of academic inquiry potential problems generated by the dual roles of law practice as a profession and as a business. The Center has taken the following steps to explore the issue of commercialization of the legal profession and to develop the general academic program of the Center:

A. National Conference on the Commercialization of the Legal Profession

The Center sponsored a National Conference on the Commercialization of the Legal Profession in Charleston, S.C., on May 28-29, 1993. Attendance at the conference was by invitation only and was limited to fifteen distinguished judges, practitioners, and law professors from around the country, representing various segments of practice. Discussion at the Conference was lively and produced a wide-ranging array of ideas and issues. The papers and proceedings from this Conference are being published in this special edition of the *South Carolina Law Review*.

B. Research Stipend Program

The Center has established a research stipend program to support research and other scholarship into issues involving the legal profession and its role in society. The Center has sent invitations for stipend proposals to every law school in the country and has received many outstanding proposals. Papers

from two recipients of Center stipends, Professor Michael Ariens and Mr. Phillip Nexon, are also being published in this special issue of the *South Carolina Law Review*.

C. Advanced Legal Profession Course

During the 1992-93 academic year, the Center sponsored the offering at the Law School of a new Seminar in Advanced Professional Responsibility. The course was jointly taught by ten members of the Law School faculty and focused on advanced ethical issues in various areas of practice.

D. South Carolina Bar Foundation Lectures

The Center has sponsored periodic lectures in the area of professional responsibility. In 1992 Professor Stephen Gillers of New York University Law School delivered a speech to the Law School community entitled: "Is The Legal Profession Dead?: Yearning To Be Special In An Ordinary Age." In 1993 Monroe Freedman, Howard Lichtenstein Distinguished Professor of Legal Ethics at Hofstra Law School, spoke to the Law School and the annual meeting of the South Carolina Bar on "Contemporary Issues in Professional Ethics."

III. SERVICE PROGRAMS

The major service component of the Center is the Law School's Voluntary Student Pro Bono Program. USC Pro Bono is recognized as the outstanding voluntary pro bono program in the United States and has been used as the model for other schools that are considering adopting voluntary programs. President Bush named the Program as his 444th Point of Light on May 1, 1992; the University of South Carolina also recognized the program as one of the outstanding organizations on campus.

Pam Robinson, Assistant Director of the Center, administers the Pro Bono Program in conjunction with a volunteer student board representing each of the major activities of the Program. The Pro Bono Program participates in a wide range of service programs, including:

- Big Brother/Big Sister
- Cities in Schools
- Guardian Ad Litem
- HIV Project/Women's Shelter
- Immigration Law Project
- Lexington County Juvenile Arbitration Program
- Literacy Project with Parolees
- Richland County Public Defender's Office
- Sistercare/Women's Law Association
- South Carolina Bar Pro Bono Program
- South Carolina Death Penalty Resource Center
- South Carolina Department of Youth Services Projects &
- Richland County Pre-Trial Intervention Program
- South Carolina Legal Services Research
- VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance)