

# Small Firms = Big Market

2011 NALP Annual Education Conference

Palm Springs, CA

Friday, April 29, 2011

10:15am – 11:45pm

## Supplemental Materials\*

\*Please note that the PowerPoint will be available on the NALP Conference webpage following the event

### **Presenters:**

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## State Bar Association Small Firm Section Guide

Many states have specific small-firm related sections which can be extremely useful tools for schools that are looking to develop relationships with small firm attorneys. Generally, the purpose of these sections is:

- (a) To provide a forum for the discussion of problems of common interest to small firm practitioners;
- (b) To advance the quality of legal services provided by small firm practitioners;
- (c) To provide a forum for the creation, discussion, advancement, and implementation of ideas to accomplish the foregoing purposes;
- (d) To sponsor CLE programs for solo and small firm practitioners; and
- (e) To provide a professional support network for solo and small firm practitioners.

Other state bar associations have Law Firm Practice Management sections that are designed to assist solo and small firm attorneys with practice management issues. Here, the emphasis is typically on practical programs addressing the nuts and bolts of small firm management. These sections are typically populated by small firm attorneys who are excellent resources for CSO staff.

General Practice Sections are another good resource for seeking out small firm attorneys. These sections are typically concerned with matters of interest to the general practitioner, including developments in legislation, regulation, practices and procedures in all areas of general practice and their impact on law office management.

It's also very important that you know the demographics of each relevant section. For example, the Arizona section is comprised mostly of solo attorneys, and not many small to mid-sized firms. Knowing that ahead of time can save a lot of time and effort in terms of outreach!

**American Bar Association:** General Practice Solo & Small Firm Division:  
<http://www.americanbar.org/groups/gpsolo.html>

**Alabama:** Practice Management Assistance Program  
<http://www.alabar.org/pmap/index.cfm>

**Arkansas:** Solo, Small Firm & Practice Management Section  
<http://www.arkbar.com/Section/SectionInfo.aspx?id=9>

**Arizona:** Solo Practice/Small Firm Section  
<http://www.myazbar.org/SecComm/Sections/XP/>

**California:** Solo and Small Firm Section  
<http://solo.calbar.ca.gov/>

**Colorado:** Solo Small Firm Practice Section  
<http://www.cobar.org/index.cfm/ID/20156/SO/SM/Solo-Small-Firm-Practice/>

**Connecticut:** General Practice Section  
<https://www.ctbar.org/Sections%20Committees/Sections/SmallFirmPracticeManagement.aspx>

**Washington, D.C.:** Law Practice Management Section  
[http://www.dcbbar.org/for\\_lawyers/sections/join.cfm](http://www.dcbbar.org/for_lawyers/sections/join.cfm)

**Delaware:** Small Firms and Solo Practitioners Section  
[http://www.dsba.org/sections/small\\_firms.htm](http://www.dsba.org/sections/small_firms.htm)

**Florida:** General Practice Solo and Small Firm Section  
<http://www.floridabar.org/DIVCOM/PI/CertSect.nsf/Sections?OpenForm>

**Georgia:** Law Practice Management Program  
[http://www.gabar.org/programs/law\\_practice\\_management/](http://www.gabar.org/programs/law_practice_management/)

**Hawaii:** No specific small firm, practice management or general practice sections  
<http://www.hsba.org/sections.aspx>

**Idaho:** Law Practice Management Section  
<http://www2.state.id.us/isb/gen/sections.htm>. Click on the Law Practice Management Section.

**Illinois:** General Practice, Solo, and Small Firm Section  
<http://www.isba.org/sections/generalpractice>

**Indiana:** General Practice, Solo and Small Firm Section  
<http://www.inbar.org/ISBALinks/Sections/SectionsPublic/GeneralPracticeSoloSmallFirm/tabid/271/Default.aspx>

**Iowa:** General Practice Section  
<http://iabar.net/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=210> Click on the General Practice Section. Must be a member to access this information.

**Kansas:** Solo and Small Firm Section  
<http://www.ksbar.org/sections/solo/index.shtml>

**Kentucky:** Small Firm Practice & Management Section  
<http://www.kybar.org/Default.aspx?tabid=372>

**Louisiana:** Solo and Small Firms Section  
<http://www.lsba.org/2007Solo/>

**Maine:** General Practice Section  
<http://www.mainebar.org/sections.asp>

**Maryland:** Solo and Small Firm Practice Section  
[http://www.msba.org/sec\\_comm/sections/solo/index.asp](http://www.msba.org/sec_comm/sections/solo/index.asp)

**Massachusetts:** General Practice, Solo & Small Firm Section  
<http://massbar.org/member-groups/sections/general-practice,-solo--small-firm>

**Michigan:** General Practice Section  
<http://www.michbar.org/general/>  
The Law Practice Management Section  
<http://www.michbar.org/lawpractice/>

**Minnesota:** General Practice, Solo & Small Firm Section  
<http://www2.mnbar.org/sections/general-practice/index.asp>

**Mississippi:** No specific small firm, practice management or general practice sections  
<http://www.msbar.org/section.php>. A small firm listserv is available for Bar members only.

**Missouri:** Solo/small firm committee (1,400 members)

<http://lawyers.mobar.org/>

**Montana:** No specific small firm, practice management or general practice sections

<http://www.montanabar.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=6#sections>

**Nebraska:** General Practice section. Must be a state bar member to access website information. <http://www.nebar.com/>.

**Nevada:** No specific small firm, practice management or general practice sections

<http://www.nvbar.org/Sections/Sections.htm>

**New Hampshire:** No specific small firm, practice management or general practice sections

<http://www.nhbar.org/about-the-bar/join-a-nh-bar-association-section.asp>

**New Jersey:** General Practice Section

[http://www.njsba.com/committees\\_sections/](http://www.njsba.com/committees_sections/) Click on “General Practice”

**New Mexico:** Solo/Small Firm Section

<http://www.nmbar.org/AboutSBNM/sections/SoloSmallFirm/solosmallsection.html>

**New York:** General Practice Section

<http://www.nysba.org/> → “Sections / Committees” (on left) → “General Practice Section”

**North Carolina:** General Practice Solo and Small Firm Section

<http://gpsmallfirmandsolo.ncbar.org/>

**North Dakota:** No specific small firm, practice management or general practice sections.

<http://www.sband.org/Sections/>

**Ohio:** Solo, Small Firms and General Practice section

<http://www.ohiobar.org/pub/?articleid=115> Click on Committee and Section Chairs

The website is available to state bar members only.

**Oklahoma:** General Practice/Solo and Small Firm Section

<http://www.okbar.org/members/sections/#general>

**Oregon:** Sole & Small Firm Practitioners

<http://www.osbar.org/sections/ssfp.html>

**Pennsylvania:** Solo and Small Firm Practice

<http://www.pabar.org/public/sections/genco/>

**Rhode Island:** No specific small firm, practice management or general practice sections

<https://www.ribar.com/For%20Attorneys/Bar%20Committees.aspx>

**South Carolina:** Solo and Small Firm Section

<http://www.scbar.org/Sections/SoloandSmallFirmSection.aspx>

**South Dakota:** Sole Practitioner and Small Office Section, must be a member to access the information

<http://www.sdbar.org/memberspublic/Sections.shtm>

**Tennessee:** General, Solo & Small Firm Practitioners  
<http://www.tba.org/sections/GSSMLaw/>

**Texas:** General Practice, Solo and Small Firm Section  
<http://gpsolo.com/>

**Utah:** Solo, Small Firm & Rural Practice Section  
<http://www.utahbar.org/sections/solo/Welcome.html>

**Vermont:** Small Practice Section Chair is John C. Thrasher Esq, Ceglowski & Thrasher LLC  
Email: thrasher@c-tlaw.com List of current section chairs may be found at:  
<https://www.vtbar.org/Upload%20Files/attachments/committees.pdf>

**Virginia:** General Practice Section  
<http://www.vsb.org/site/sections/generalpractice/>

**Washington:** Solo and Small Practice Section  
<http://www.wsba-ssp.org/>

**West Virginia:** No specific Sole Practitioner and Solo Practice Firms Section  
<http://www.wvbarassociation.org/divisions.asp>

**Wisconsin:** General Practice Section  
[www.wisbar.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=General\\_Practice\\_Section](http://www.wisbar.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=General_Practice_Section)  
Law Office Management Section  
[www.wisbar.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Law\\_Office\\_Management\\_Section](http://www.wisbar.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Law_Office_Management_Section)

**Wyoming:** No specific small firm, practice management or general practice sections.  
[http://www.wyomingbar.org/resources/member\\_services.html#sections](http://www.wyomingbar.org/resources/member_services.html#sections)

## **Listing of State/City Bar Association Small Firm Conferences**

We all know that state bar conferences are great places to network. But many states have specific small-firm related conferences where students can be guaranteed a chance to network with this special group of attorneys. A sample listing of these conferences is found below.

### **NATIONAL BAR ASSOCIATIONS:**

ABA: General Practice, Solo, Small Firm Division Annual Conference – May 2011

### **STATE BAR ASSOCIATIONS:**

Arizona: 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Sole Practitioner & Small Firm Section Conference – November 2011

Florida: 5th Annual General Practice Solo and Small Firm Conference – April 2011

Illinois: “Information coming soon” see <http://www.isba.org/soloconference>

Indiana: Solo & Small Firm Conference - June 2011

Louisiana: Solo & Small Firm Conference - February 2012

Missouri: 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Solo & Small Firm Conference - June 2011

Oklahoma: Solo & Small Firm Conference - June 2011

Texas: Solo Annual Meeting - June 2011

Virginia: Solo and Small Firm Practitioner Forum - May 2011

Wisconsin: Solo & Small Firm Conference – October 2011

### **CITY BAR ASSOCIATIONS:**

New York City Bar: Annual Law Practice Management Symposium

## **Best Practices on Teaching Students to Follow Up With Small Firms: The Who/What/When/Why/How**

- WHY: Emphasize that it is critical for law students to follow up when they say they will as it demonstrates organization and the ability to accept responsibility (traits highly valued by small firm employers). Small firms do not have a recruiting staff. They typically are very busy attorneys who will appreciate the student's effort and initiative.
  
- WHEN: Email within 48 hours of initial contact. After that, every three months. This is a good time frame because that's how often firms tend to evaluate their business needs. If, for example, an attorney is consistently busy for two quarters then that can be the basis for justifying hiring a law clerk or even a new attorney.  
  

*EXCEPTION*: Students should always get in touch if they help or if something new happens. Examples: Answer a question, send an article, send a congratulatory email for being named top business lawyer by the XYZ publication, let the attorney know their article has been accepted for publication. Pretty much anything that will further the connection!
  
- WHAT do they say? Depends:
  - KNOW WHAT NOT TO SAY; They don't ask for a job. BUILD THE RELATIONSHIP FIRST.
  - Great to meet you at \_\_\_\_\_
  - Thank you so much for your time and advice.
  - Indicate the student's desire to stay in touch.
  - Send interesting articles, postings, websites, etc.
  - Ask them to keep the student in mind for project work.\* Caution the student to not solicit for project work if they are not prepared to accept and complete it immediately!
  - Let the contact know that they are free to pass the student's info on to colleagues who might need help with a project or a part-time law clerk. Look for ways to offer help:
  - Attorney says: "I'm interested in serving as a moot court judge. Who do I talk to about that?"
  
- WHO: The provided contact or person met and any referring party. Students will not obtain future referrals if they do not thank the referring person who would be left wondering whether the student made contact.
  
- HOW: Using the Follow Up Organizational Tool (below) will help law students follow up when they say they will, as well stay focused and organized as they build relationships with potential employers and future colleagues.

## SMALL FIRM FOLLOW UP ORGANIZATIONAL TOOL

CONTACT	METHOD	FOLLOW UP 1	FOLLOW UP 2	ACTION	NEW
<p>1. Joan Jones 47 Main Street Orlando, FL 32666 352 777-0000 (private practice— corporate) Tell her CSO referred me to her</p>	<p>Ltr to Joan Jones, Esq. Request informational interview sent 10/15</p>	<p>11/1 called, out until 11/5 -daughter just had baby</p>	<p>11/6 called again, new grandson, Blaine, scheduled Informational interview for 11/20 in connection with meeting— will meet her 20 min before 1<sup>st</sup> Coast Luncheon. She invited me to attend luncheon with her.</p>	<p>11/6 sent confirmation email  11/20 sent thank you note to Joan Jones thanking her for her time, for the luncheon and for introduction to Sarah Smith. Sent thank you email to CSO to let her know I had lunch with Joan.</p>	<p>Joan Jones Introduced me to Sarah Smith at 1<sup>st</sup> Coast Business Women's Luncheon 11/20.</p>
<p>2. Sarah Smith 347 University Ave., Orlando, Fl, 33333 352 374-1111 (local tax practice)</p>	<p>11/21 email to Sarah Smith thanking her for talking with me at 1<sup>st</sup> Coast Luncheon and asking for info interview.</p>	<p>11/24 sent follow up ltr &amp; article from Miami Herald on local tax issue that is being appealed to Florida Supreme Court</p>			
<p>3.</p>					
<p>4.</p>					