

MENTORING

Background

Since the inception of the legal profession, lawyers have willingly offered support, encouragement and guidance to less experienced lawyers. This is true today as much as in the past. Most of this mentoring was done informally, either by a protégé asking a more experienced lawyer for mentoring, or an experienced lawyer initiating the offer.

With the practice of law evolving more toward specialization, the need for protégés to be matched with mentors with similar areas of practice became apparent. Many local bar associations attempted to fill this need with a formal mentoring program for their members.

The Senior Lawyers' Division of the American Bar Association conducted research of various mentoring programs in 1995. From this information, the division created a Mentor Program resource guide. There is no ABA mentoring model program.

Missouri Bar Activities

The Mentoring Program of The Missouri Bar was approved and created by the Board of Governors in 1998. The program was designed after reviewing the various programs and guidelines of the aforementioned resource guide of the ABA Senior Lawyers Division.

The Mentoring Program is designed to provide a mentor for a period of one year. Every effort is made to match a protégé with a mentor who has experience in similar or sought-after areas of practice, size of practice, special skills and abilities. Requested gender and racial preferences, if any, are honored.

Since its inception in 1998, more than 250 matches have been made. For more information, please see the mentoring web page at www.mobar.org/feature/featurem.htm.