

MRWBA MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

2016-2017

Michele Satterlund, Chair

The 2016-2017 MRWBA Membership year kicked off last fall with a New Member Happy Hour at The Veil Brewing Company on Thursday, November 3, 2016. The social was sponsored by Bowen Ten Cardani and celebrated not only MRWBA's new members, but those members who passed the 2016 Virginia bar exam. There was a cash bar and lots of tasty hors d'oeuvres, and members who passed the 2016 bar received a free drink ticket. During the course of the evening, approximately 45 MRWBA members came to socialize and network with each other.

A second Member Happy Hour is planned for May 11, 2017 between 4:30 and 6:30pm at Casa Del Barco. This social is sponsored by Spotts Fain and we anticipate a good showing of old and new MRWBA members.

As of March 31, 2017, membership totaled 238 members. 177 of these members were returning members and 61 were new. This reflects an increase in membership from 2016, which totaled 221 in May, 2016. The board and the committee continues to contact potential new members by email and by phone, and we are hopeful that the membership total will continue to grow.

In an effort to ensure MRWBA stays relevant and provides value to the membership, the membership committee met early in the bar year to discuss opportunities to ensure the organization was meeting member needs. The membership committee, which includes Casey Lucier, Lindsay Walton, Kassie Schroth, Rebecca Lightle, Britney McPheron, Kim Chandler, Tara Badawy, Kylene Lovell, Beth Browning, Blaire Hawkins, Rachael Loughlin, Elizabeth Turner and Jessica Strock, shared the following ideas for meeting membership needs:

Why Membership is Valuable

- Learn how to become a rain-maker
- Learn how to better craft an individual practice.
- Provides an avenue for free CLE.
- Opportunity to meet other women – professional women – in RVA. This is particularly important for women who are not from the area.
- Provides a greater opportunity to learn about women in the RVA legal scene.
- Provides a great path for new lawyers to navigate the legal scene in RVA.

Mentorship

- Prefer to see a change from the one-on-one mentorship to three or four with one mentor, which will eliminate the fear of trying to appear “together” and eliminate the stress of one-on-one mentorship.
- Encourage small group meetings where the mentors talk about getting jobs and assist mentee as an informal sounding board.

Luncheons and CLEs

- Hear more about leadership – training women to be strong leaders.
- Hear more about how to become a solid rain-maker and get clients.
- More luncheons on how to run a successful law practice.
- Not interested in select topics that only appeal to a select group of members (i.e. a criminal law CLE).
- Political luncheons are fantastic - Do more with the Gubernatorial and AG races.
- Consider more business building topics – Partner with NAWBO.

Networking

- Need it more personal.
- Indicate who is a new members at the luncheon.
- Ensure a board member is seated at each table and engages the new members.
- More happy hours.
- Make the newsletter more personal with member news – if we learn someone had a baby, it gives us a reason to reach out.
- Celebrate those members who have passed the bar – host a member event that recognizes these newly minted lawyers.
- Host a 3L recognition event.

Misc.

- Consider a survey for all members that asks what they want
- Post job and information about “other” free CLE opportunities. (This example was forwarded after the meeting)

The committee remains committed to growing the organization and as chair, I would like to thank each committee member for their individual and collective efforts to make the 2016-2017 bar year so successful. The committee’s input was important and the feedback will be beneficial to the continued growth of the organization.