

PREPARING FOR THE PRACTICE OF LAW

It is always challenging to make the transition from law school to practice, but it seems especially difficult during these changing times. New lawyers are entering perhaps the most challenging economic environment in my 30 years as a lawyer. Those who have been practicing for a few years not only face stiff competition, but also must grapple with a rapidly changing legal landscape as they navigate their life in the law.

During times like these, the benefits of mentoring are invaluable. As a profession, we need to connect with young lawyers as early in their careers as possible to ensure that they are prepared for the responsible practice of law and are committed to professionalism. Certainly we should support these lawyers by making available to them the tools they need to succeed. Yet we also need to impart to them the accumulated wisdom of experienced lawyers and help guide our profession's newest members to become better advocates for their clients and more engaged participants in the communities we serve.

I am pleased to present *Transition to Practice: A Mentoring Initiative for Local Bar Associations*. The program, based on a pilot project by the Dallas Bar Association, is intended to be easy to use, inexpensive, and readily adaptable to the needs of individual bar associations, law firms, or corporate or governmental law departments. I am grateful for the assistance of the Texas Young Lawyers Association in preparing and distributing this resource guide and indebted to the lawyers of Dallas who have proven that such a program can be successful.

Now, more than ever, we as a profession need to step up to help our young lawyers. Please join me in helping to provide a successful transition to the practice of law.

Sincerely,



Roland K. Johnson
President, State Bar of Texas (2009–2010)

