

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF RHODE ISLAND
ONE EXCHANGE TERRACE
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND 02903**

**WILLIAM E. SMITH
CHIEF JUDGE**

September 18, 2014

Dear Federal Bar member,

I am writing you to let you know about the launch of our new “Litigation Academy” in partnership with the Roger Williams University Law School and the Rhode Island Chapter of the Federal Bar Association.

The purpose of this program is to create a low-cost, high-quality forum for teaching our less experienced litigators the skills needed to successfully litigate cases. We have accomplished this by bringing together the donated resources of the court, experienced members of the bar, and the law school.

The first program we will offer is in Deposition Skills, on November 13-15, 2014. The course will be an intensive two-day program (noon Thursday to noon Saturday) to be held at the federal courthouse in Providence on Thursday, November 13th and Friday, November 14th, and Roger Williams University Law School on Saturday, November 15th. The course will be limited to 24 students, and is targeted to attorneys who have been members of our bar for less than 10 years. We expect demand for the program to be high, so an effort will be made to admit a class that is diverse in terms of experience, size of firm, public/private sector practice, and experience level.

If this program is successful, our goal is to develop additional offerings in trial skills, including opening statements, closing arguments, and conducting direct and cross examinations, as well as jury selection. We are hopeful that by combining the resources of the court, the bar and the law school we can create an environment where less experienced lawyers can learn and practice the skills that will enable them to become exceptional litigators from some of the best attorneys in our bar.

We hope that you will consider applying or encouraging your associates to do so. Detailed information about the program (including on-line registration) can be found by visiting the court’s website or by clicking [here](#). If you have any questions about the program, please feel free to contact the program chairs, Brooks Magratten (bmagratten@pierceatwood.com; 401-490-3422) or Niki Kuckes (nkuckes@rwu.edu; 401-254-4505).

Sincerely,



Chief Judge William E. Smith
United States District Court
District of Rhode Island