

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

**William E. Smith
Chief Judge**

March 15, 2016

Dear Federal Bar member,

I am writing to tell you about the newest project of the Litigation Academy – our Opening Statements and Closing Arguments Skills Training Program, which will take place on May 2 to 6, 2016.

As you may know, the Litigation Academy is an innovative joint project of this federal court, the Roger Williams University School of Law, and the Rhode Island Chapter of the Federal Bar Association. With experienced lawyers and judges volunteering to serve as faculty, the Litigation Academy seeks to provide high-quality, low-cost training to help practicing lawyers who wish to improve their trial skills.

Our newest program will help lawyers hone their opening statements and closing arguments skills in the actual setting of a federal courtroom, using exhibits and facts from a mock case. Practice sessions will be presided over by a federal or state judge. Coaching will be provided by professional actors and experienced Rhode Island trial lawyers. This hands-on training will be supplemented by informational lectures and demonstrations. A reception will also be held for all participants and faculty, to give participants a chance to mingle and network.

The faculty for this program includes:

Chief Judge William E. Smith
Judge John J. McConnell, Jr.
Magistrate Judge Patricia Sullivan
Judge Brian P. Stern
Judge Judith C. Savage
Judge Daniel A. Procaccini
Melody Alger
Angela Brazil
Christine Bush
Marc DeSisto
John Foley
Mauro Hantman
Prof. Thomas Jones
J. Scott Kilpatrick

Casey Seymour Kim
Prof. Niki Kuckes
Dennis McCarten
Neal McNamara
Brooks R. Magratten
James T. Murphy
Stacey Nakasian
Matthew Oliverio
Steven M. Prignano
J. Richard Ratcliffe
Patricia Rocha
Lillian Romano
Richard Rose
Miriam Weizenbaum

The program will take place entirely at the federal courthouse, and will provide thirteen hours of hands-on training and lectures spread over four days. The schedule for the program is as follows:

<u>Monday, May 2:</u>	1:30 to 4 p.m.	Lectures and Demonstration
<u>Tuesday, May 3:</u>	2 to 5 p.m.	Lectures and Demonstration
	5 p.m.	Reception
<u>Thursday, May 5:</u>	8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.	Practice Sessions
<u>Friday, May 6:</u>	9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.	Presentation of Openings & Closings

Approximately 13 hours of CLE credit will be available, including 1 Ethics CLE credit. The cost of the program is \$400 (including course materials). The Litigation Academy will begin accepting applicants into the program on Tuesday, March 15, continuing thereafter until the program is filled.

To register, use this link: <http://www.eventzilla.net/web/event/opening-statements--closing-arguments-2138834195>

Some partial scholarships are available based on financial hardship from the Rhode Island Chapter of the Federal Bar Association. Lawyers who would like to apply for such a scholarship must first write to rratcliffe@rhbglaw.com with a brief description of the nature of your law practice and a request to be considered for a scholarship. If you are awarded a scholarship, you will be provided with a special code which should be used when you register for the program.

I hope you will consider participating in this new trial skills training program, or will encourage your associates to do so. If you have questions, feel free to contact one of the Program Co-Directors: Brooks R. Magratten, available by phone at (401) 490-3422 and by e-mail at bmagratten@PierceAtwood.com; or Professor Niki Kuckes, available by phone at (401) 254-4505 and by e-mail at nkuckes@rwu.edu.

Sincerely,



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