



Trial Academy: Training Tomorrow's Leading Litigators

The annual GDLA Melburne D. "Mac" McLendon Trial Academy once again attracted lawyers from across Georgia to Callaway Gardens from January 19-21, 2012. The seminar kicked off this year with a welcome reception for faculty and students on Wednesday evening.

The students were then guided through the two-and-a-half day experience by a distinguished faculty led by Chair Matthew G. Moffett of Gray Rust St. Amand Moffett & Brieske, Atlanta, and including: Vice-chair Sarah B. "Sally" Akins of Ellis Painter Ratterree & Adams, Savannah; Jerry A. Buchanan of Buchanan & Land, Columbus; Douglas K. Burrell of Drew Eckl & Farnham, Atlanta; William T. Casey, Jr. of Hicks Casey & Foster, Marietta; Robert R. "Rusty" Gunn II of Martin Snow, Macon; William D.

Harrison of Mozley Finlayson & Loggins, Atlanta; James S. "Sandy" Owens, Jr. of Nall & Miller, Atlanta; and Richard H. "Dick" Willis of Bowman and Brooke, Columbia, South Carolina

In recognition of the growing trend toward mediation, this year's program was updated to open with a segment on mediation strategies. This session featured John Miles, of Miles Mediation & Arbitration, who addressed trying your case at mediation. Next, BAY Mediation & Arbitration's Bruce Barrickman discussed effective use of technology at mediation. Both BAY and Miles are GDLA Platinum sponsors.

Court of Appeals Chief Judge John J. Ellington participated on day one as the keynote luncheon speaker, to discuss professionalism considerations at trial.

Trial Academy employs a modified mock trial format. In advance

of the seminar, the students were divided into defense and plaintiff's teams; each received a case to study to begin preparing aspects of the trial. GDLA Platinum Sponsor Courtroom Visuals provided trial graphics. Following faculty demonstrations, students dispersed into breakout groups to work on their skills.

Opening day concluded with a reception and dinner, sponsored by BAY and Miles, giving students and faculty time to network outside the classroom setting. Chief Judge Ellington also attended the event, sharing informal insights from both his years as a lawyer and judge.

Trial Academy continues to be the GDLA's premier seminar, geared toward training the next generation of leading litigators.

See photo highlights on next page. ❖