

May it Please the Court: Professionalism and the Bench

Livestream: April 16, 2025, 3:00 – 4:00 PM ET (*available on-demand afterwards!*)

Series Description:

Exemplifying Professionalism

This series of courses explores the critical role of professionalism in legal practice and examines how civility shapes relationships with clients, colleagues, opposing counsel, non-lawyers and the court. Using the [American Inns of Court Professional Creed](#) as a springboard, you'll learn practical applications of professionalism and ensure your advocacy is not only effective but also exemplary.

Program Description:

Judicial Observations of Professionalism

I will serve as an officer of the court, encouraging respect for the law in all that I do and avoiding abuse or misuse of the law, its procedures, its participants and its processes.

—The American Inns of Court Professional Creed

I will represent the interests of my client with vigor and will seek the most expeditious and least costly solutions to problems, resolving disputes through negotiation whenever possible.

—The American Inns of Court Professional Creed

Arguably, judges are poised to witness both good examples of professionalism, as well as egregious breaches. This program will examine some of the common professionalism “missteps” that judges see; explore judicial obligations to address or stop bad behavior; and discuss considerations of unprofessional or uncivil behavior when the Bench makes their rulings.

Another perspective the program addresses is identifying what action opposing counsel can take if the Bench calls out the other side: what is an appropriate reaction? Is there a way to use this to your client's advantage while still maintaining professionalism?

Finally, what if the lack of professionalism or civility is coming from the Bench? Is there any recourse?

Leave this program with:

- An understanding of judicial perspectives and expectations of civility and professionalism.
- Insight into the consequences of incivility and lack of professionalism on attorney careers and reputations.
- Suggestions on managing a lack of professionalism whether it comes from opposing counsel or the Bench.

Presentation Outline:

- **Welcome and introduction of the topic**
 - Observations of professionalism from the Bench.
- **Professionalism in Practice: Understanding the Rules That Shape Your Conduct**
- **Judicial Perspectives on Professionalism: What Judges Expect from Attorneys**

- ***Navigating Unprofessional Conduct: Strategies for Attorneys in Difficult Courtroom Situations***
- ***Q&A and Closing Remarks***

Presenter Bios:

Carree Nahama (*moderator*) is the founder and owner of Nahama Law, celebrating its 10th anniversary of dedicated service to injured children and their families. With a reputation for compassion, diligence, and exceptional results, Carree leads her legal team to make a meaningful impact on clients' lives. An award-winning trial attorney, she was honored with the prestigious “Streetfighter” award by Consumer Attorneys of San Diego (CASD) in 2023. Throughout her career, Carree has exemplified the highest standards of civility and professionalism, setting a benchmark for others in the legal field. She is a Benchler and team leader for the Louis M. Welsh Inn of Court, where she fosters mentorship, ethical advocacy, and professional growth among peers. As co-chair of the Women’s Caucus for CASD, Carree champions initiatives that empower attorneys and promote inclusivity within the legal community. Guided by the Latin phrase “bona fide,” Carree embodies authenticity, integrity, and passion. A committed volunteer and gifted connector, she is known for her advocacy of intergenerational collaboration and her ability to unite professionals across various specializations and firm sizes.

Hon. Karen S. Crawford was appointed as a Magistrate Judge for the U.S. District Court of the Southern District of California in March 2012. Previously, she was a partner at Duane Morris LLP, and Litigation Chair in their San Diego office. Before entering private practice, Judge Crawford served as a Trial Attorney in the Civil Division, Torts Branch in Washington, D.C. where she received the Director’s Award for outstanding service. Thereafter, she was an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Civil Division of the U.S. Attorney’s Office in San Diego. Judge Crawford served as the Secretary and member of the Board of the American Inns of Court Foundation. She is the past President of the Louis M. Welsh American Inn of Court and current President of the J. Clifford Wallace American Inn of Court. In 1998, she received the A. Sherman Christensen Award in recognition of inspiring leadership with the American Inns of Court movement and committed efforts to improve the American legal profession. She was recently honored to receive the 2024 American Inns of Court Ninth Circuit Professionalism Award in recognition of her dedication to mentoring law students and lawyers.

Patricia P. Hollenbeck, partner at DuaneMorris, practices in the area of commercial and business litigation, handling individual and class action cases in state and federal courts, and also has extensive experience in arbitration and mediation. Her industry focus is primarily comprised of clients in the consumer and franchising sectors, but also includes claims focused on business interference, unfair competition, consumer legal remedies and false advertising; trademarks and trade dress violations; and trade secrets. Ms. Hollenbeck also has extensive experience with litigating temporary restraining orders and injunctions. She has handled over two hundred arbitrations. Ms. Hollenbeck is very active in the San Diego legal community, as an instructor for the National Institute of Trial Advocacy, a Director and Vice-President of the San Diego Inn of Court (trial training program), on the Board of Directors of the San Diego County Bar Association, and as a Benchler and executive committee member in the Louis M. Welsh American Inn of Court.