



Update and General Selection Criteria— Background and Mission

*By Kimberly Till Powell and
Sam David Knight*

The Alabama State Bar Board of Bar Commissioners initiated the Alabama State Bar Leadership Forum in 2005. The mission of the Leadership Forum is to: (a) form a pool of lawyers from which the Alabama State Bar, state and local governmental entities, local bar associations and community organizations can draw upon for leadership and service; (b) build a core of practicing lawyers to become leaders with respect to ethics and professionalism, resulting in raising the overall ethical and professional standards of lawyers in the community; and (c) raise the level of awareness of lawyers as to the purpose, operation and benefits of the Alabama State Bar.

With four years of graduates, the Leadership Forum continues not only to meet, but exceed, its mission. The overwhelming response of former graduates about their Leadership Forum experience includes praise for the program and enthusiasm about relationships fostered during the forum. Leadership Forum alumni include a member of the state house of representatives, bar commissioners, candidates for public office, judges, a pastor, a former military officer, a mayor, and a president of a local bar foundation.

2008 Leadership Forum (Class 4)

The fourth class of the Alabama State Bar Leadership Forum graduated in May and attended a banquet at the Capital City Club in Montgomery. Following an invocation by Class 4 member **James B. Perrine**, then **ASB President Sam Crosby** introduced **Gordon G. Martin**, senior vice president and general counsel of Alabama Power Company, as the guest speaker. **Keith Jackson**, a member of Class 2 of the Leadership Forum and co-chair of the 2007 and 2008 Leadership forums, gave comments on behalf of the 2008 Steering Committee. **Kimberly Till Powell**, a member of Class 3 of the Leadership Forum and co-chair of the 2008 Leadership Forum, and **Sam David Knight**, a member of Class 4, were announced as co-chairs for the 2009 Leadership Forum. **President Crosby**, assisted by then **President-Elect J. Mark White**, presented each graduate with a certificate and gift commemorating their participation in the forum. Class 4 graduates **Dana Hill** and **Robert Lockwood** shared their reflections on the Forum. ASB Assistant Executive Director and Leadership Forum Director **Edward M. Patterson** was honored with a gift from Class 4 for his commitment to the forum and his service to the state bar.

Also in attendance at the graduation were **ASB Past President William N. Clark** (in whose term the Leadership Forum was approved by the Board of Bar Commissioners); consultant and facilitator **Kathryn Story**; Balch & Bingham's managing partner, **Alan Rogers**; ASB Leadership Forum Administrative Assistant **Marie Updike**; ASB Director of Communications **Brad Carr**; and **President Crosby's** sister, **Martha Crosby. Mike and Mickey Turner of Freedom Court Reporting Service**, whose support and commitment to Class 4 of the Leadership Forum have been invaluable, were also there. Leadership Forum Alumni in attendance included **Rich Raleigh** (Class 1); **Jim Hughey** (Class 2); **William Lunsford** (Class 3); **Sandra Reiss** (Class 3); and **Patrick Sefton** (Class 2).

Selection Process and Criteria

The 2009 Steering Committee is already actively involved in planning for Class 5. The Forum will continue to honor its mission through an evolving and expanded program designed to introduce participants to leadership opportunities throughout the state.

Each year, the Selection Committee seeks to draw a broad and representative class of between 25 to 30 members from throughout the qualified Alabama State Bar membership. The initial class suggested by

the Selection Committee is reviewed by the Executive Committee of the Alabama State Bar, and the final selection is made and approved by the Board of Bar Commissioners. Applicants do not require a nomination in order to submit their application. One letter of recommendation must be attached to the application.

If you have been a member of the Alabama State Bar for more than five years, but no more than 15, please consider applying to become a member of the Alabama State Bar's 2009 Leadership Forum. Following receipt of all applications, the Selection Committee, appointed by the president of the state bar and comprised of Leadership Forum alumni, reviews the applications for the following criteria in making the initial selection decisions:

1. Demonstrated leadership ability based on past accomplishments and current engagements;
2. Practice diversity (criminal, civil, governmental and corporate);
3. Geographic diversity;
4. Racial and gender diversity;
5. An understanding of the importance of servant leadership as demonstrated in the applicant's narrative; and
6. Previous application to the Leadership Forum.

Alumni of the Leadership Forum are listed on the next page if you wish to contact them concerning their experience. ▲▼▲



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Sam David Knight is a partner with Gordon, Dana, Still, Knight & Gilmore LLC in Birmingham. He graduated from Auburn University and the University of Alabama School of Law. He is an alumnus of Class 4 of the Leadership Forum and is co-chair of the Leadership Forum Planning Committee for Class 5 (2009).

Quotes from Class 1

"I was a member of the first class in 2005 and still keep in touch with lawyers I met from other areas of the state. The timing could not have been better as I became chair of the Women's Section just a few months after completing the forum. Through my participation in this program, I gained invaluable knowledge about the workings of the state bar and about leadership in general. It made me a much more effective section leader and should continue to be of benefit to me as I become involved in other areas of the bar and other organizations."

—Mary Margaret Bailey

"The Leadership Forum was an invaluable opportunity to meet lawyers from across the state. Together, we learned about important issues affecting the state and how we, as lawyers, have a duty to make a positive impact. I would highly recommend the Leadership Forum to any lawyer who cares passionately about Alabama."

—Jenna M. Bedsole

Quotes from Class 2

"The Leadership Forum was an incredible experience, which allowed class members to connect in a meaningful way and learn more about our state's bar. Through the forum, tools were disbursed for the next generation of bar leaders."

—Wyndall A. Ivey

Quotes from Class 3

"Before applying, I thought I was too busy to participate in the Leadership Forum. After starting the program, I realized that it was too good of an opportunity to miss. I met new people, made new friends and, most importantly, learned how to better serve my law firm, my community and my family."

—Christina D. Crow

"Being a part of the Leadership Forum opened doors to new friendships and new, shared concerns with fellow classmates of which I was previously unaware. I learned about the many issues and needs within our state and got to meet the leaders who are trying to address the needs in both big and small ways. Most importantly, I learned that these leaders are all very different, there is no 'one type' of leader, other than being willing to tackle a problem and stick with it."

—Sandra B. Reiss