

Riverside County Bar Association

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September 1, 2020

The New Attorney Academy, which is sponsored by the Riverside County Bar Association, the Riverside Superior Court and the American Board of Trial Advocates of the Inland Empire, has become an institution, now entering its 7th year. The Academy is a training program for new attorneys (under 5 years of practice), where instruction is given on a range of subjects. It provides practical instruction on topics, such as how to take a deposition, trial techniques, pleadings and discovery and Alternative Dispute Resolution. It also gives invaluable information about the courts and gives a “behind the scenes” look at how our courts operate, including both the civil trial court and the appellate court. And most importantly, it helps new attorneys learn about practicing in Riverside and the Inland Empire and why our legal community is so very special. All of the instruction is done by renowned Inland Empire attorneys, judges and court staff.

Under normal circumstances, we would be taking applications right now and begin our first class in October. Unfortunately, these are not normal circumstances. With the COVID-19 pandemic, we are unable to hold in-person sessions. After careful consideration by our steering committee, it was decided that trying to hold sessions remotely was not a viable option.

The steering committee of the New Attorney Academy is still committed to holding the program. As soon as it is lawful and safe to do so, our intent is to start the program back up immediately.

If you have already submitted an application for the 2020-2021 year, please note that we will be in touch with you as soon as we have the green light to hold our first session. If you are interested in the Academy, you should complete an application now so that you are contacted when the program begins again.

For those of you who participated in our 2019-2020 program and were unable to complete the Academy because of the COVID-19 pandemic, you are welcome to participate in any of our classes that you have missed when we start up again. If you complete the Academy, as intended, you will be able to graduate at the end of this year’s program. If you are interested in this option, please let Charlene Nelson know so that she can add you to our list of participants.

In the meantime, I would suggest that all new attorneys become involved with the Riverside County Barristers, which is the new attorney branch of the Riverside County Bar Association. You can learn more about their virtual events on the RCBA website or on their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/RCBAbarristers>. It is a great way to meet other new attorneys and to begin to participate in our amazing legal community.

We all can remember what it is like to be a new attorney and still want to provide you with a network during these unprecedented times. If you have a question about your practice, please feel free to contact me at robynlewis@ilewislaw.com or my co-chair, Greg Rizio, at grizio@riziolawfirm.com. If we don't know the answer, we will try to put you in touch with an attorney who does.

Finally, I encourage you to get to know Charlene Nelson, who is the Executive Director of the Riverside County Bar Association. She is an amazing resource and will help you navigate the start of your legal career with open arms.

Again, I would encourage you to complete your application for the New Attorney Academy as soon as possible. Hopefully, we will regain some sort of normalcy soon and I will be able to meet you in person. Until that time, stay healthy and safe and let us know if you have any questions.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robyn A. Lewis".

Robyn A. Lewis,
New Attorney Academy Committee Chair
RCBA Past President, 2011-2012