

A Legacy



By Thomas L. Cuni

It is a rare person who does not wish to leave behind something for which he or she will be remembered after life is done. When you read Homer's *Iliad*, you learned about "kleos" in order to understand Achilles. It literally means "what other people say about you." Few of us will have a *kleos* to rival that of Michael H. Neumark. Some years ago, he organized and led a group of attorneys, judges and educators to create a remarkable program: the Cincinnati Academy of Leadership for Lawyers (CALL). That CBA program recently graduated its 13th class of young men and women. They will be a strong part of the CBA and the community into the future.

Neumark's original concept was, like most good ideas, simple, and after he suggested it, obvious. We live in an increasingly busy world in which there is little time and less opportunity for younger members of the profession to learn leadership skills. Neumark recognized the need to be addressed and articulated a solution. At its most fundamental, CALL is designed to give those with proven leadership qualities an

opportunity to teach and to exhibit those qualities to people who wish to learn about, and to improve, leadership skills.

The stated purpose of CALL is "to create an institute under the sponsorship of the Cincinnati Bar Association in cooperation with the University of Cincinnati College of Law, to promote and encourage leadership and professionalism among practicing attorneys in the Greater Cincinnati area." Its goals

include building a core of leaders who will advance ethical practices, professionalism, and service to the community.

It takes only a glance at the roster of the CALL steering committee (*see left*), chaired by the Hon. Julie A. Stautberg, to understand why the program is so good.

To accomplish its goals, CALL focuses on teaching participants to be

better problem solvers and more effective leaders. Consensus building, listening skills, and ethical advocacy are some of the practical skills and techniques which are addressed.

Earlier this year, I had the opportunity to attend a two-day segment of the CALL program which

was held in Lexington. The program was practical in its approach and very effective in illustrating the various styles and methods of leadership. It has always seemed to me that associating with interesting people is a good idea. The young attorneys whom I met in this year's CALL class were both interesting and fun.

I met Michael Neumark only a few, very brief, times during his life. Having seen how his idea has benefited the CBA, the profession, and the community, I now wish that I had known him better. The CALL program is a legacy which will ensure that what people say about him will reflect well on who he was as an attorney, as a leader of our profession, and as a good man.

The benefit of CALL extends beyond those who participate. I would urge that law firms, large, medium, and small, take advantage of the program to prepare their future leaders.

If you would like to participate and invest some of your time and effort in what I promise will be one of the more valuable experiences of your life, call Lisa McPherson at (513) 699-1398, or e-mail her at lmgcpherson@cincybar.org.

If I have not convinced you to join, call a few of the participants of Class XIII who are listed on page 7 of the 2009-2010 CBA Directory and ask them about the program. You will want to share the experience. 

Thomas L. Cuni is 2009-10 president of the Cincinnati Bar Association.

CALL Steering Committee

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