

THE HCCLA SECOND CHAIR PROGRAM

Summer / Fall 2012 Semester



APPLICATION

Name:

Address:

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

e-mail: _____ Texas Bar Number: _____

I have been a practicing CRIMINAL lawyer for _____ years.

I have been FIRST CHAIR FOR THE DEFENSE on _____ trials.

I would like to be a FIRST CHAIR SECOND CHAIR

I would like to be given 1 Partner 2 Partners

If you've participated before, are you still working with a partner? Yes No

.....
FIRST CHAIRS: Indicate your areas of expertise.

SECOND CHAIRS: Indicate your areas of interest.

Homicide/Robbery Juvenile DWI Drugs Parole
Appeals Federal (If you check this box, you must be admitted in federal court)
Mental Health Sex Crimes White Collar Crime Other _____

.....
If you regularly practice in any counties besides Harris, which ones?

Fort Bend Montgomery Galveston Brazoria Other _____

.....
What special skills/knowledge can you contribute to the partnership?

What do you hope to gain from the partnership?

Are there any particular people you would like to have as your partner? (no guarantees)

Please tell us a bit about your background and (for Second Chairs) why you chose criminal defense.

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Fill out application online at HCCLA.org by June 8, 2012.

Questions or comments? Contact Sarah V. Wood at SarahVWood1@aol.com or 713.530.6147.

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The Harris County Criminal Lawyers Association is now accepting applications for a new semester of The Second Chair Program. This mentorship program aspires to strengthen the defense bar by uniting the ranks of more experienced criminal defense attorneys (FIRST CHAIRS) with those seeking to enhance their professional education (SECOND CHAIRS). If you would like to receive a partner for this semester, please follow the steps below.

I. Make Sure You Meet The Requirements

- Participation in the program either as a First or Second Chair will be limited to current HCCLA members who are licensed and in good standing with the Texas Bar.
- First Chairs need at least 5 years as a criminal lawyer and to have been first chair for the defense in at least 5 trials. Please inquire about alternate requirements for First Chair participation in appeals, parole, or other areas. All levels of experience are eligible as Second Chairs.
- Make sure you have the ability to participate. The program is only as successful as the time and energy each member is willing to contribute.

II. Submit Your Application

- The application deadline is **Friday June 8, 2012**.
- Please **fill out the application online** at www.HCCLA.org – look for the Second Chair Application link on the top right side of the home page. Or go to the direct link at www.hccla.org/members-only/second-chair-program/
- Partnership assignments announced at the Brainstorming Luncheon on **Tuesday June 12, 2012**, 11:30 a.m., 7th Floor CJC.

III. Make a Plan

Once you are given a partner, communicate promptly with one another to decide how you wish to structure your partnership. We recommend that you use one or more of the following formats:

- *Second-Chairing* - In the traditional fashion, the First Chair selects one or more of their cases for their Second Chair to essentially sit second and participate in co-counsel style.
- *Role Reversal* - If you participate by reversing roles, then the Second Chair chooses one or more of their cases on which the First Chair can essentially sit second-chair. This is recommended when the Second Chair has a difficult case where they need help.
- *Shadowing* - All partnerships should include shadowing. In shadowing mode, the First Chair permits their Second Chair to follow them around. Going to court, meeting with clients, investigating, going to ALR or parole hearings, just checking out records or filing motions - all of this and more can promote the partnership through shared experience and observation.

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Questions or comments? Contact Sarah V. Wood at SarahVWood1@aol.com or 713.530.6147.

THE HCCLA SECOND CHAIR PROGRAM: HELPFUL HINTS

First Chairs

DO:

- Introduce your Second Chair to judges, attorneys, and court staff members and try to foster a good working relationship.
- Include your Second Chair in out-of-court activities, including meetings with the client, witnesses, or investigators.
- Give your Second Chair assignments so that he/she can contribute to the case.
- Consider inviting your Second Chair to work on other cases with you after the program case is finished.
- Spread the good word about your Second Chair, if warranted.
- Report seriously offensive conduct or unusual circumstances relating to the program to the program administrators.
- Uphold the highest ethical and professional standards as a representative of The HCCLA Second Chair Program

DON'T:

- Don't overload your Second Chair with bothersome work or unwanted responsibility.
- Don't ask him/her to do menial tasks like making coffee or ironing your socks.
- Don't have your Second Chair attend settings without you.
- Don't depend on program administrators to resolve disputes between you and your Second Chair.

Second Chairs

DO:

- Initiate and maintain consistent contact with your First. In many cases, it is up to you to drive the relationship. If at first they don't respond, try, try again. They're probably just busy winning cases.
- Make every effort to meet in person with your First. Shadowing your First in court is often the most effective use of personal contact. Review case files with them and observe how they interact with clients, judges, prosecutors, and staff. Respectfully offer your own fresh perspective as well as any specific assistance.
- Frequently express your desire to assist. Ask, "Is there anything I can do to help this week?"
- Make sure your First is aware of your special talents and expertise.
- Ask direct questions about what you most want to know.
- Let your First know who you are. Informing them of your life situation as well as your professional goals will give them the perspective necessary to best support you.
- Work hard. Do your homework, go the extra mile, and it will show. Demonstrating competence will actually encourage your First Chair to do more for you.
- Make mentorship as gratifying as possible for your First. Always express your gratitude and share your successes. Keep your First engaged with polite personal conversation. Celebrate their accomplishments and promote their reputation.
- Understand that the benefits of a mentoring relationship are not automatic. Though in special cases it may occur, it is not your First Chair's responsibility to get you a job or provide a lesson plan. Again, it is up to you to drive the relationship.
- Uphold the highest ethical and professional standards as a representative of The HCCLA Second Chair Program.

DON'T:

- Don't speak to *anyone* about the case without specific prior approval.
- Don't do *anything* on the case without specific prior approval.
- Don't put your name on any motions or other documents relating to the case.
- Don't overload your First Chair with pestering questions about other cases.
- Don't depend on the program administrators to resolve disputes between you and your First Chair.