

## HISTORY OF THE COMMISSION & THE MENTOR PROGRAM

---



The ABA's Commission on the Mentally Disabled was established in 1973 to respond to the advocacy needs of persons with mental disabilities. After the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the ABA broadened the Commission's mission to serve all persons with disabilities and changed its name to the Commission on Mental and Physical Disability Law (CMPDL). Today, the CMPDL carries out an array of projects and activities addressing disability-related public policy, disability law, and the professional needs of lawyers and law students with disabilities.

The Mentor Program was created in 2000. It began with just handful of ABA accredited law schools in Washington, DC, but has expanded to include numerous law schools across the nation. Since its inception, the Program has grown to accommodate hundreds of mentors and mentees.



740 15th Street, N.W., 9th Floor  
Washington, DC 20005

---

Phone: 202-662-1570

Fax: 202-442-3439

E-mail: [cmpdl@abanet.org](mailto:cmpdl@abanet.org)

<http://www.abanet.org/disability>



---

**Commission on  
Mental and Physical  
Disability Law**

---

---

**NATIONAL  
MENTOR  
PROGRAM FOR  
LAWYERS AND  
LAW STUDENTS  
WITH  
DISABILITIES**

## ~ ABOUT THE CMPDL MENTOR PROGRAM ~

The Mentor Program is guided by the Commission's Subcommittee on Lawyers with Disabilities. This national program was established for:

- law students with disabilities
- prospective law students with disabilities, and
- recent law school graduates with disabilities

The Program's purpose is to give these types of students the opportunity to learn from an experienced attorney on various disability-related and legal issues. The Program is run on a volunteer basis and both mentors and mentees may join and leave at their leisure.

Program participants are also eligible to join the Commission's e-mail list, the Disability Discussion Docket, which is both a forum for the Program and a source of disability law and disability rights information.



### MENTOR INFORMATION

Mentors are expected to aid their mentees on topics such as seeking accommodations, finding summer employment or internships, learning about different areas of the law, getting involved with the ABA and other bar associations, studying for the bar exam, and making contacts in the legal profession.

You **do not need to have a disability** in order to be a mentor. Experience in working with those with disabilities is strongly preferred in lieu of having a disability. Above all, a willingness to donate your time is needed.

### MENTEE INFORMATION

The Program is open to all students with disabilities who are considering law school, currently attending law school, or have recently graduated from law school.

If you qualify as a mentee, you will be asked to provide information regarding your disability and what you desire in a mentor. Based off of this information, CMPDL staff will attempt to find the best suited mentor for your needs.

Many of our mentees return to the Program later as mentors.

---

*For additional information, or to join the Mentor Program visit:*

**Mentors:**

<http://www.abanet.org/disability/mentorprogram/mentor.shtml>

**Mentees:**

<http://www.abanet.org/disability/mentorprogram/mentee.shtml>

---

*For questions about the program please contact:*

William J. Phelan, IV, Esq.  
Special Projects & Technology Coordinator  
American Bar Association

Phone: 202-662-1576  
phelanw@staff.abanet.org