

## NOMINATION FORM

Project Title Law School for Legislators  
Bar Association/Foundation Oklahoma Bar Association  
Contact Person Donita Bourns Douglas  
Address 1901 North Lincoln Boulevard, P.O. Box 53036  
Oklahoma City, OK. 73152

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Phone Number (405) 416-7028 Fax Number (405) 416-7092

### Membership Size and Type of Organization:

- State bar association with more than 18,000 members, or its affiliated foundation
- State bar association with 18,000 or fewer members, or its affiliated foundation
- Local bar association with more than 5,000 members, or its affiliated foundation
- Local bar association with membership between 2,001 and 4,999, or its affiliated foundation
- Bar association with 2,000 or fewer members, or its affiliated foundation.

### Description

Describe the program in 200 words or less.

**The Oklahoma Bar Association's Law School for Legislators is a program planned for newly elected legislators. The program provides basic information on how Oklahoma government works. Topics covered in the 2006 program included the criminal justice system, sources of law, separation of powers, the power of the veto, the power of precedent, and interesting facts about the Oklahoma Constitution. The 2006 program concluded with tips presented via storytelling presented by an OBA member who is a former legislator. All of the speakers were very prominent Oklahoma citizens including the Lieutenant Governor and the now Chief Justice of the Oklahoma Supreme Court.**

## Type of Project

Mark the category this project most closely falls under:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improved Administration of Justice                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Law-Related Education         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improved Access to Justice                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Adults <input type="checkbox"/> Children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enhanced Image of Profession                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Service                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special Needs (Children, Immigrants, Seniors, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                                    |

To your knowledge, is this a new project or has it been developed from an existing project? If modeled after another program, describe how it was adapted in a new or unique way.

**Other jurisdictions have similar programs. The idea was borrowed, but the format and specific topics are original.**

## Objectives & Goals

Please state the problem or need this program addressed.

**The make up of the Oklahoma Legislature has changed dramatically since term limits were adopted in Oklahoma. The change resulted in a significant number of new members, many of whom are non lawyers and are unfamiliar with the legislative process, including the division of powers. This program gives newly elected legislators an introduction and/or refresher on how government works.**

## Implementation

Please describe the methods used to address the problem.

**Basic instruction was provided via lecture, question and answer periods, and interactive exercises.**

## Time Table

Please address when project was initiated and time spent in preparation and in implementation.

**Initially the Law School for Legislators was presented in 2004. Work on the 2006 program started in October 2006 with identifying topics and confirming speakers. After the November elections, invitations were sent. In November and December administrative details were handled: rsvps, materials, name badges,**

**catering arrangements and press releases. Set up of the event was the day prior. Four OBA staff employees worked an estimated thirty-five hours.**

### **Target Audience**

Who was the intended audience (age groups, occupations, etc.)?

**Newly elected legislators from varied educational and professional backgrounds: farmers, teachers, business owners, etc.**

Number of people served by the program?

**Seventeen House and Senate Members attended. In addition, staff members for other house and senate members and other state officials attended. Arguably, all of the citizens of the State were served by the program because the program contributed to making Oklahoma law makers more effective.**

### **Budget**

What was the total budget for the program?

**Not including staff time, less than \$ 2,000 was budgeted and spent.**

How was the program funded?

**General operating funds.**

### **Results/Evaluation**

How was the program evaluated? What were the results? Were the objectives/goals met? Feedback from community?

**Evaluations were distributed at the end of the program. An evaluation summary is included. Participants were universally positive about the experience. Because understanding of the process was increased, and relationships forged, the objectives and goals of the OBA were met. Additionally, because the participants know the Oklahoma Bar Association exists and is a resource for them, the Association specific objectives and goals of were met. Prior to the next Law School for Legislators@ the 2006 participants will be surveyed to determine, given their legislative experience, what of the 2006 program content was helpful and what content was missing that could have been helpful.**

Will the program be continued?   X   Yes        No

### **Volunteers & Staff**

Total number of people involved in developing and implementing the program   4  

Of this number, how many were volunteer attorneys?   0

Address concerns other bars may have if they were to replicate this program.

**Funding and attendance are two primary issues when planning any event and this event is no exception. With competing interests, all quite worthwhile, it may be difficult to persuade bar leadership to allocate funds to a program like this. The multiple benefits are difficult to qualify. Involvement in the program by bar leaders should create much support for future programs.**

**Securing participants is another challenge. First, depending upon your state or local election board, it may be difficult to confirm who has been elected and their contact information. Second, who you invite beyond the elected officials is an issue of concern. In Oklahoma, we invited Senate and House staffers and other state agency employees so they can see what we are doing and become comfortable with what we are doing. As a mandatory bar, it is important to have an open program, so no one could argue any part of the program was not appropriate. Third, each bar should carefully consider the issues to be presented at the program. Obviously more freedom is available to voluntary bars in selecting topics for presentation. Without regard to the legal freedom voluntary bars may have in programming, careful consideration should be given to the issue selection. A program that is more an opportunity to lobby probably won't fare as well as the program that educates.**