



5 Ways Young Lawyers can Show up and Stand out during the COVID-19 Isolation

by Mariah L. Hornok

Now that the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and our State and local leaders have recommended against gathering in large groups in order to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, many, if not all, of our previously scheduled in-person CLEs have been cancelled. My colleague, Kyle Akin, previously wrote about the numerous benefits of young lawyers attending CLE courses in person, including the opportunity to meet new people, create memories, and drum up potential clients. *See Top Ten Reasons Young Lawyers Should Attend CLE Courses in Person*, News For The Bar, November/Winter 2019. Now that we are unable to gather, does that mean we are unable to have an impact on our legal community? Absolutely not! Here are five ways you can SHOW UP and STAND OUT during this unprecedented time:

1. **Host an online CLE.** Are you tech savvy? Whether you are or not, if you own a smart phone or a computer with a web camera, you are fully equipped to host your own online CLE. To do so, you will need to contact an

accredited CLE sponsor, or contact Sophia Ramon, sramon@ramonworthington.com or Chari Kelly, chari.kelly@txcourts.gov, to get your idea approved for an online CLE through the Litigation Section. During these crazy times, why not consider going out on a limb and offering your expertise to your colleagues and to the greater legal community? The ability to do multiple takes and to edit your final product makes hosting an online CLE less intimidating than presenting one in-person. If you cannot think of an idea for a CLE, talk to others in your firm; someone will have an idea for you.

- 2. Publish articles and papers.** Have you worked on an interesting or novel legal issue recently? Have you stumbled upon an underdeveloped area of the law? If so, GREAT! Write about it! Now, more than ever, members of our Litigation Section, our legal community, and potential clients are reading. Show off your expertise by writing and submitting helpful articles and papers to a law journal, bar journal, legal newsletter, or even your own firm's website. Whatever your specialty or interest, sharing your passion and knowledge is beneficial to you as a young litigator and to your community at large. Not only will this exercise help you polish your own understanding of the law and refine your writing skills, this exercise will also help the rest of us who do not know your niche nearly as well as you do. And of course, published works are great publicity for yourself and for your firm.

3. Leverage technology. Many of us take for granted the daily use of ever changing technology. We are comfortable with our devices and their boundless capabilities. But some may be struggling. Keep an eye out for colleagues (including partners and colleagues older than you) that seem overly burdened by the idea of an upcoming virtual hearing or meeting. Offer to test the technology with them; they will undoubtedly appreciate your offer to help. Others may be struggling to move cases forward effectively while working remotely. Take this opportunity to help your colleagues and law firm shift their practice online so they can permanently leverage the efficiency offered by technology. Here are a few resources you might find helpful:

- a. Cisco WebEx - <https://www.webex.com>
- b. BlueJeans - <https://www.bluejeans.com>
- c. GoToMeeting - <https://www.gotomeeting.com>
- d. Zoom - <https://zoom.us>
- e. G Suite or Hangouts from Google - <https://gsuite.google.com>
- f. Slack - <https://slack.com>
- g. Skype - <https://www.skype.com/en>
- h. Microsoft Teams - <https://products.office.com/en-us/microsoft-teams/group-chat-software>
- i. Box - <https://www.box.com>
- j. Dropbox Business - <https://www.dropbox.com/business>

4. **Reach out.** In many ways we are coping with our isolation through technology, but sometimes, the classic approach to networking is the most powerful. When is the last time you reached out to a mentor, law school professor, classmate, or someone you met at a pre-COVID-19 CLE? If you are like me, it has been awhile. Now is a great time to send them a note. Go ahead; reach out to your long-lost acquaintances. Check in on them, ask them how their careers have developed over the years, and be vulnerable enough to tell them about yourself. Even if you do not hear back from him or her, you can rest assured, you made a positive impact on their day.

5. **Volunteer.** While some of us may be safely riding out the COVID-19 wave, for many this is a time of significant need. Many businesses and individuals are seeing their income evaporate and are wondering how they will pay the bills as they come due. Others are dealing with the sudden illness or death of loved ones. As members of the legal profession, there is a lot we can do to serve those most affected by COVID-19. For ways to volunteer and for helpful resources provided by the State Bar of Texas, visit https://www.texasbar.com/Content/NavigationMenu/Coronavirus_COVID_19. It is precisely our ability to serve the needs of the public that makes our work essential while many others have been told to shelter-in-place.

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