

Moving the Profession Forward – Solo and Small Firm Lawyers

Lawyers who have solo practices or are in small firms are vital to meeting the legal needs of Wisconsin residents, especially those in the state’s rural areas and small communities.

BY DEAN R. DIETRICH

I had the opportunity to attend all three days of the State Bar of Wisconsin’s Solo & Small Firm Conference in mid-October 2023. It was invigorating and scary at the same time.

It was invigorating to see all the solo and small firm lawyers who want to serve their clients and serve the legal profession. It was exciting to see lawyers’ interest in expanding their practices, learning new practice areas, and improving how they can provide services to their clients.

It was scary to learn about all the traps that we can fall into with the use of technology as part of our law practices. It was hard for me to comprehend that I should be communicating with artificial intelligence to fine-tune the product that it would produce to help me meet my clients’ needs. I worry about lawyers spending more time talking (or typing messages) to a computer than meeting with clients and offering “live” legal advice. The future of the legal profession is uncharted, and we all need to adapt to the new technology but also preserve the integrity of our profession and service to our clients.

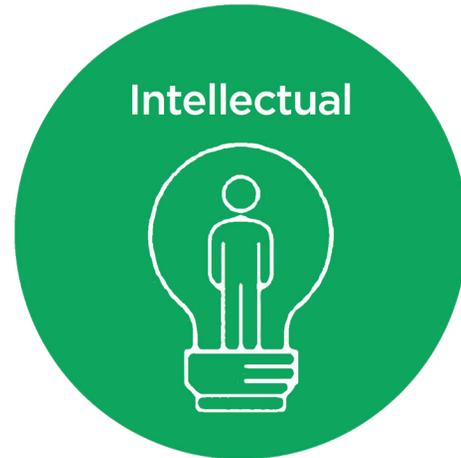
It was exciting to see the lawyers attending this conference and showing their dedication to the legal profession and to their clients. It was also fascinating to see the businesses and service companies that can help lawyers be more efficient and provide more value to their clients. Solo and small firm lawyers are the heart of the State Bar membership, and it is wonderful to hear lawyers talk about the variety of services that they provide to their clients and how they meet the needs of clients in small towns and rural areas.

The provision of legal services by solo and small firm lawyers also is something that we must strive to preserve. Please do not misunderstand – lawyers in large firms meet the needs of many clients and are also an important part of the legal profession. It is just fun to see how lawyers are meeting the needs of all types of clients in all types of legal matters throughout the state.

Thank you to the solo and small firm lawyers who move the profession forward!
Remember: Lawyer wellness is important! **WL**



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