

Elder Law Study Group

Steering Committee:

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Madison, Wisconsin

Mary Jane Ciccarello, Esq.
Borchard Foundation
Center on Law & Aging

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William Mitchell
College of Law

Prof. Lawrence A. Frolik
Univ. of Pittsburgh
School of Law

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Univ. of Illinois
College of Law

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Syracuse Univ.
College of Law

Clin. Prof. Kate Mewinney
Wake Forest
School of Law

Prof. Rebecca C. Morgan
Stetson Univ.
College of Law

Charlie Sabatino, Esq.
ABA Commission on
Law & Aging

Dist. Prof. Edward D. Spurgeon
Pacific McGeorge
School of Law

Prof. Linda Whitton
Valparaiso Univ.
School of Law

September 5, 2008

Dear Professor:

Twenty years ago, elder law was a new field. Today, a sizeable portion of American law schools offer elder law courses, and across the country attorneys are holding themselves out as elder law specialists.

Yet relatively little is known about the state of elder law teaching and scholarship. Although it appears that increasing numbers of law schools offer elder law courses, what is being taught in those courses? What are the challenges and opportunities faced by those teaching elder law? What kinds of scholarship are being produced? By whom? With what end?

You are invited to participate in a research study that seeks to answer these important questions and, more generally, to describe the current status of the field of elder law teaching and scholarship and to formulate recommendations for the field's future development.

The study is being conducted by the Elder Law Study Group, a group of legal academics and elder law experts brought together by the Borchard Foundation Center on Law and Aging and the Institute for Laws of Health and Aging at Pacific McGeorge School of Law. You were selected as a possible participant because we understand that you currently teach or previously taught an elder law course, and/or that you have published scholarship in the field of elder law.

Your requested participation is to complete a multi-page survey intended to learn about teaching and scholarship in the field of elder law. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and your decision not to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits. By completing the survey, in whole or in part, and returning it, you will have evidenced your informed consent, and no further consent on your part is needed or expected.

The co-principal investigators of this study are Distinguished Professor and Lecturer Edward D. Spurgeon of University of Pacific, McGeorge School of Law (nsurgeon@pacific.edu; 916-739-7058) and Associate Professor Nina A. Kohn of Syracuse University College of Law (nakohn@law.syr.edu; 315-443-6565). Please feel free to contact either at any time with any questions about the research. If you have questions about your rights as a participant, please call the Research and Graduate Studies Office of the University of Pacific at 209-946-7356.

While entirely voluntary, your participation in this survey is nonetheless critical to the success of our endeavor. We cannot accurately describe the field unless those teaching and writing in it are willing to share their experience and knowledge with us. We therefore earnestly hope you will generously take the time (estimated to be twenty minutes) to complete the survey. Once you have, please return it in the enclosed, self-addressed, stamped envelope by October 15th, 2008.

Thank you in advance for your time. Again, if you have questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact either of us.

Sincerely,

Nina A. Kohn
Associate Professor
Syracuse Univ. College of Law

Edward D. Spurgeon
Distinguished Professor
Pacific McGeorge School of Law