



## NEW YORK STATE DEFENDERS ASSOCIATION DEFENDER INSTITUTE

# 2009 Basic Trial Skills Program

June 7-13, 2009

*"It is innovative and inspiring, and challenges you to question conventional defense lawyering."*

*"It was thrilling. My confidence has soared. I can do this!"*

*"It reaffirmed my greatest strength and my belief that the client should be the foundation of my work."*

*—Past BTSP Participants*

### About the Basic Trial Skills Program

The Basic Trial Skills Program is designed to help attorneys with little or no trial experience become skilled in the techniques of jury persuasion and confident of their abilities to conduct jury trials. A second goal of the program is to increase the sensitivity of the participants to the conditions of the lives of their clients and to promote caring, humane and effective representation. The program seeks to foster a long-term commitment to the representation of poor people. The Criminal Justice Section of the New York State Bar Association presented the Defender Institute its Award for Outstanding Contribution to Criminal Law Education. The New York State Judicial Commission on Minorities has called the program "a model for other agencies that provide legal assistance to the poor."

The training includes small group exercises, lectures and demonstrations by attorneys and communication specialists and informal sessions with participants and faculty. Participants are divided into small groups according to experience. Topics covered during the six-day program include jury persuasion, theory of the case, client interviews, *voir dire*, opening statement, objections, cross-examination, impeachment, direct examination, and closing argument.

**This program is extremely demanding, with more than 40 hours of breakout sessions, lectures, and demonstrations. To successfully participate in the training, you must be familiar with all case materials prior to the program as well as preparing daily during the program for participant exercises.**

### Dates

**Sunday, June 7 through Saturday, June 13, 2009. Application deadline is Monday, April 6, 2009.**

### Location and Accommodations

The Defender Institute 2009 Basic Trial Skills Program will be held at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI), Troy, New York. *Participants will share a dormitory room in an RPI student residence hall.* Single rooms will be available on a limited basis for an additional fee.

### Application and Admissions Process

The Defender Institute seeks to accept from a broad range of New York counties full- and part-time defenders and assigned counsel practitioners who handle a substantial number of assigned criminal cases. Participants are trained by some of the best trial attorneys and communication spe-

cialists in the country. If selected, participants are required to make a personal commitment to attend all sessions of the program.

Each year, NYSDA's Defender Institute receives more applications than it can accept and must turn down some applicants due to lack of space in the program. Because participants will learn from each other both informally and in small group exercises, a diverse student body is sought. Some of the factors for acceptance are: levels of trial experience; diversity of the participant population; commitment to the representation of the poor; need for training; and skills or experiences, both in and out of the law, that can be shared with fellow participants. Those persons not selected for the program will be placed on a ranked waiting list.

Applications must be complete, and are subject to confirmation by chief defenders.

### MCLE Credit

NYSDA has been certified by the New York State Continuing Legal Education Board as an Accredited Provider of Continuing Legal Education in the State of New York (2007-2010). This transitional program has been approved for all attorneys, including newly admitted lawyers, in accordance with the requirements of the Continuing Legal Education Board for approximately 30 credit hours (depending on the final schedule), of which approximately 2 credit hours can be applied toward Ethics and Professionalism. Tuition assistance for financial hardship is available.

### About the New York State Defenders Association

Spurred on by the Supreme Court's decision in *Gideon v. Wainwright*, the New York State Defenders Association (NYSDA) was incorporated in 1967 to be the voice for defense lawyers in New York State. In 1981, New York State contracted with the Association to run the nation's first Public Defense Backup Center, a clearinghouse that provides consultation, research, expert referrals, training and publications to the state's more than 5,000 public defense attorneys. In 1987, NYSDA established the Defender Institute, which presents the Basic Trial Skills Program and carries out a statewide series of continuing legal education seminars for public defense attorneys.

**TO APPLY:** Send a COMPLETED APPLICATION AND YOUR RESUME to NYSDA by **April 6, 2009**. Persons with late applications will be placed on a ranked waiting list.