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IAALS Report & Knowledge Center Analyzes Allied Legal Professionals Programs

IAALS Releases Report, Knowledge Center on Programs That License Allied Legal Professionals to Provide Legal Services

Following in the footsteps of the Washington State Bar Association's now-sunset Limited License Legal Technician program, several jurisdictions have built or are exploring ways for legal professionals other than lawyers to be trained and certified to provide certain types of legal services. Now, the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System has released a report and an online knowledge center aimed at gathering best practices, evaluating advantages and challenges in different types of programs, and creating models that can be used when exploring or establishing these programs in the future. To learn more about these programs and how IAALS thinks they can help close the access to justice gap, visit the [knowledge center](#), which also contains a link to download the report.

As Big Law Firm Layoffs Continue, Lawyers at Small Firms Say Their Future Looks Bright

Not long ago, there was a talent war for associates to join Big Law, with many firms offering fully remote work and signing bonuses. Those days appear to be over: Now, many firms are laying off their newest lawyers, for whom they don't have enough work to offer. But is there reason to think this round of layoffs won't cut quite as deep as those during the Great Recession of 2008? Find out at [Bloomberg Law](#). Meanwhile, lawyers in small firms are feeling successful and optimistic, according to a survey conducted by Thomson Reuters, in collaboration with the ABA Solo, Small Firm and General Practice Division. Nearly six in 10 lawyers in firms of 29 or fewer said they expected growth over the next 12 months in revenues per lawyer, billable hours, and profits per lawyer; their projections for the next three years were similarly positive. At [LawSites](#), Bob Ambrogi shares other key findings.

State Supreme Court Overrules Washington State Bar Association Character and Fitness Board, Admits Registered Sex Offender to Practice

In a 5-4 opinion, the Washington Supreme Court ruled that a law school graduate with sex offender status should be admitted to practice, reversing a 2019 recommendation by the Washington State Bar Association character and fitness board. Zachary LeRoy Stevens was 19 years and presenting himself online as being 16 when he sent pornographic pictures of minors to an undercover detective posing as a 14-year-old. Law enforcement seized his computer and webcam in 2006 as a result, and Stevens eventually pled guilty to voyeurism. The majority opinion cited as mitigating factors his age at the time of the incident, his troubled upbringing, and his lack of access to mental health treatment when he was younger. The opinion also suggests that tying his past mental health issues and resulting behavior to his current moral character and fitness could discourage others from seeking treatment. The dissenting opinion asserts that this ruling could result in "forum shopping" by other law school graduates with criminal records. Learn more at [ABA Journal](#).

Kaplan Data Suggests Many Law Schools Will Keep LSAT

Requirement Regardless of ABA Decision, Also, Three Top Law Schools Withdraw from U.S. News & World Report Rankings

Last week, the ABA Council of the Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar voted to eliminate the admission test requirement for accredited law schools. However, test prep company Kaplan released data that said half of the 82 law school admissions offices it surveyed were either "very" or "somewhat" likely to continue requiring the LSAT or GRE regardless of this decision. (Because Kaplan offers LSAT prep courses, it has a vested interest in law schools continuing to require it.) [Reuters](#) has more information. In other law school news, last week, three top-ranked schools announced they would withdraw from the annual rankings by U.S. News & World Report because the priorities that underlie this list don't match those of their schools. Deans at Yale and Harvard law schools, ranked 1 and 4 respectively, said the rankings incentivize giving financial aid based on high LSAT scores and undergraduate grades rather than on need. Berkeley's law school, which is also in the top 10, withdrew one day later; its dean explained that this was because the rankings penalize schools whose students pursue further degrees or public interest careers while rewarding spending that drives up tuition. What law schools are considering that same move—and what could prevent many others from joining in this trend? Find out at [Reuters](#) and [The New York Times](#).

New Bar Board Member: A Great Resource for Board Orientation and Learning

Whether your board turns over with the new calendar year, you're preparing for a transition later in 2023, or you'd like to provide a refresher for current board members, New Bar Board Member from the ABA Division for Bar Services is here to help. This handbook, available in print or as a download, helps board members learn about the bar landscape, fiduciary duty and the practices of exceptional boards, and how every board experience is different. Use New Bar Board Member as a foundation for your orientation, or for any board training effort. [Order it](#) for your board today!

Bar Leader Weekly is on hiatus next week. The next issue will be sent on Wednesday, December 7.



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