

**MSBA Public Law Section
Annual Report for 2008-09**

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The Public Law Section of the MSBA had another active year:

Continuing Legal Education: During the past twelve months the Public Law Section sponsored the following continuing legal education courses for a total of more than 11 CLE credits:

<i>Meeting/Course Title</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Credits</i>
Minnesota Data Practices: The Good, the Bad, and the IPAD	6/16/08	1.5
To Know It is to Love it – Data Practices 2008, with Minnesota County Attorneys Association	10/3/08	3
A Retrospective on the Republican National Convention	1/27/09	1
Real World Ethics: Issues and Answers, with 18 th District Bar Association	5/14/09	1 ethics (pending)
Lessons from Election 2008	5/15/09	2.5 (pending)
Update on Minnesota Open Meeting Law, MSBA Convention in Duluth	6/24/09	1(pending)
Data Practices Law, with Information Policy Analysis Division	6/25/09	1.5 (pending)
Total		11.5

Public Law Section News: The Section continues to publish and send its members the Public Law News, the section’s newsletter, three times a year. The newsletter has been cited locally and nationally for its quality and content and has been noted as an example of a successful bar association newsletter. Regular features include profiles of public law offices and public lawyers, discussion of current legal issues and recent court decisions, data practices opinion indices, and notices of upcoming CLE’s of interest to public lawyers. The Public Law Section distributes the newsletter to most of its members by e-mail. A recent added feature is the ability to hyperlink

from the front page table of contents to the article of interest.

Community and Public Service: The Section continued its active involvement in the community through public service this past year. The Section coordinated a day of work on a Brush with Kindness, Habitat for Humanity project. Section members and friends cooked and served meals every other month throughout the year for over fifteen hundred people through the Loaves and Fishes program. This year a legal advice clinic, civil and criminal, for attendees was begun and staffed by public lawyers and one of our student liaisons. For the last two years the Section has worked with SMRLS on an annual Senior Fair and, both there and on location, made presentations to senior citizens on Identity Theft. The Section conducted a clothing and diaper drive at the 2008 MSBA Convention in Duluth, and "adopted" twenty+ families for holiday gift giving last year.

The Section contributed to the LRAP Program, which provides assistance with the repayment of law student loans for lawyers in public service, both monetarily and by participating in the 7th Annual Race for Justice. Funding support was also provided to the Minnesota Justice Foundation.

The Public Law Section, along with the rest of the MSBA, weighed in at the Legislature on needed funding for the Justice System.

Section Committees: A number of committees and others of the Section continued to perform the essential planning and implementation work that enables the Section to operate. The Committees include the Newsletter Committee, the Awards Committee, the Community/Public Service Committee, Data Practices Committee, Nominating Committee and the Local Government Committee. The Council has designated a CLE Coordinator, a Membership Coordinator, and a Pro Bono Task Force. The Committees and others offer an opportunity for Section members to become actively involved in the work of the Section. Please contact one of the Public Law Section Co-Chairs if you would like to become involved in the work of any of these groups.

Membership including Law Students: The Public Law Section continued to work on its membership goals. Particularly explored was the concept of government office group membership which was approved in concept by the MSBA. Details continue to be developed. Over the past year we added three law students to the executive council and have benefited from their ideas and contributions. Additionally, members of the Public Law Section attended receptions held at the MSBA offices and local law schools to provide law students the opportunity to learn about the exciting work being done in public law.

Diversity Efforts: The Public Law Section has also been actively working towards the goal of eliminating bias and promoting diversity in the bar by participating in minority recruitment conference and attending law student recruitment events, including the Public Interest Career Exposition.

Recognition for Public Service: Among activities which recognize and highlight the activities of public lawyers are the Public Law Section Annual Awards.