NYLS Students Participate in First Ever Deposition Course

Twenty-four NYLS students (2Ls and 3Ls) participated in a three-day, one-credit deposition program offered for the first time at NYLS from Friday, November 9 through Sunday, November 11. The program was offered in conjunction with the National Institute for Trial Advocacy (“NITA”) and Hofstra Law School, and included participants from NYLS, Hofstra and lawyers from large and small firms, private practice, government offices and public interest organizations. The faculty, all experienced in the NITA teaching method, included NYLS Professors Mariana Hogan, Frank Bress and Susan Abraham, as well as faculty from Hofstra, Harvard and Temple Law Schools, and a group of distinguished practitioners from up and down the East Coast. The program was designed to provide intensive training in taking and defending depositions in five lecture-demonstrations and ten workshops. Topics included question formulation and sequencing, methods and ethics of witness preparation, use of exhibits, gathering information, extracting admissions and testing case and fact theories. Students were divided into working groups of eight for the duration of the program, and in each of the ten workshops each student actively engaged in performing the skill being taught and received immediate, personalized feedback from the faculty. The faculty rotated through the workshops, so students were exposed to a variety of styles and perspectives. NYLS students’ reaction to the deposition course was universally positive.

Student Testimonials:

“Initially, I was worried that I would jeopardize the study schedule for my other classes when I realized how much work Deposition Skills would be, but I left the course on Sunday night on Cloud 9. I found it to be a truly amazing learning experience.”

“Thank you for a great, intense weekend and a wonderful learning experience.”

“Thank you for making this course available and facilitating a wonderful weekend. It was definitely the best course I have taken in law school. In my opinion, the best learning is achieved by doing.”

“Being in a classroom with a professor and only seven other students was great. In my other law school classes I’ve never had the opportunity for personalized attention from faculty.”

“The actors made the experience of questioning a witness so real.”

“Letting NYLS students do a program with lawyers showed us that NYLS has confidence in us.”

“It was a great opportunity to network with lawyers.”

To find out more about clinics/externships please contact the Lawyering Skills Office at 212.431.2179.