

NEWSLETTER

Georgian Bar Association

July -September 2021



COOPERATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN GBA AND NYSBA



On September 16, David Asatiani the Chairman of the Bar Association - and the President of the New York State Bar Association - Andrew Brown - signed a cooperation agreement.

According to the agreement, Georgian Chapter will be established at the New York State Bar Association and all interested Georgian lawyers will have the opportunity to join it individually.

Within the Georgian section, meetings, conferences, seminars, trainings and other events will be held with the involvement of the New York State Bar Association, which will enable Georgian lawyers to learn about American practice, experience, and establish close professional relationships with their American counterparts.

During the meeting, Chairman Asatiani paid a special attention to the need to develop a jury trial system in Georgia, which will significantly contribute to raising the quality of criminal justice system and public confidence in it.

President Brown expressed his readiness to support the Georgian Bar Association with the resources and experience of the New York Bar Association to strengthen the knowledge and skills of Georgian lawyers.

This agreement is of particular importance for the establishment of intensive cooperation between the legal professionals of Georgia and the United States, which, in turn, will help strengthen justice and the rule of law in Georgia.

MEMORANDUM OF COOPERATION BETWEEN GEORGIAN BAR ASSOCIATION AND SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW

On September 15, in Syracuse, the State of New York, David Asatiani - Chairman of the Georgian Bar Association and Craig Boyce - Dean of the Syracuse University College of Law signed a Memorandum of Cooperation.



Within the framework of the Memorandum, starting from the next academic year, members of the Georgian Bar Association and participants of the Professional Adaptation Program will be able to participate in a special scholarship program that will cover all study programs - LLM, PhD, J.D.

The Memorandum will also provide opportunity for members of the Georgian Bar Association, lecturers and trainers to participate in various short-term exchange and research programs at the University of Syracuse.

Syracuse University is one of the oldest universities in the United States, founded in 1870 and brings together many successful and outstanding alumni, including the current President of the United States - Joseph Biden.

The rules and procedures for applying to the special scholarship program will be announced at the beginning of the next year's application cycle.

MEETING BETWEEN DAVID ASATIANI AND PRESIDENT OF THE NEW YORK CITY BAR ASSOCIATION

David Asatiani, The Chairman of the Georgian Bar Association, held a meeting with Sheila Boston, President of the New York City Bar Association. They discussed and agreed on the ways for close cooperation and planned several joint activities.

During conversation, the need to strengthen the role and skills of Georgian lawyers in jury trial was emphasized, for which a format of bilateral cooperation will be established.



The parties also agreed that the New York City Bar Association will support the Georgian Bar Association in developing the pro-bono legal aid system.

GEORGIAN LAWYERS WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH AMERICAN COLLEAGUES

On September 20, David Asatiani, Chairman of the Georgian Bar Association, and Jeffrey Apperson, Vice President of the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding regarding cooperation on joint conferences, seminars, workshops and other initiatives with participation of Georgian and American lawyers. Particular emphasis was made on the issue of the development the administration of the jury trial system in Georgia.



NCSC was founded in 1971 with the mission to promote rule of law and quality administration justice systems worldwide.

MEETING BETWEEN THE LEADERSHIPS OF THE GEORGIAN BAR ASSOCIATION AND THE DC BAR ASSOCIATION

On September 20, in Washington DC, a meeting was held between the leaderships of the Georgian Bar Association and the DC Bar Association.

During the meeting, parties agreed on various formats of cooperation, including in the areas related to the institutionalization of the pro-bono legal aid system in the Georgian Bar Association, the improvement of the evaluation system for judicial candidates and continuing legal education.

DC Bar is a mandatory membership-based professional organization founded in 1972 with more than 110,000 members.



MEETING WITH DIRECTOR OF THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION ROLI



On September 21, in Washington DC, Georgian Bar Association held a working meeting with Alberto Mora, Director of the ABA ROLI and ABA representatives.

During the meeting, parties discussed the challenges in the Georgian justice system, the current situation in terms of judicial independence, and the action plan developed by the Georgian Bar Association, which is related to raising public confidence in our justice system.

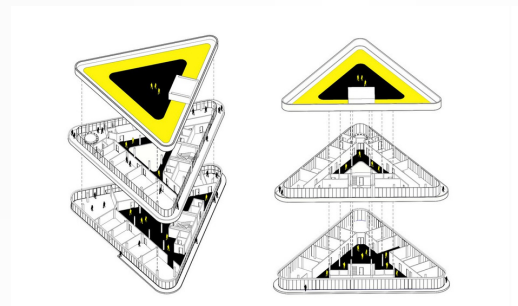
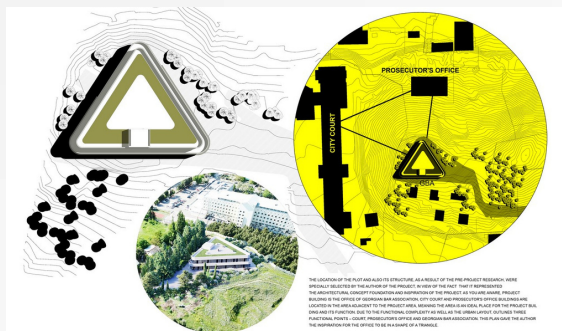
Alberto Mora emphasized the important role of the Georgian Bar Association in building a credible and independent judiciary in Georgia, and said that the American Bar Association will continue to actively support us in this process.

THE CONCEPT AND DESIGN OF THE GEORGIAN BAR ASSOCIATION HEADQUARTERS WON THE GLOBAL ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN AWARD 2021



The concept and design of the new headquarter of the Georgian Bar Association has become the winner of one of the most prestigious awards in the world - the Global Architecture & Design Award 2021.

The author of the architectural project is Davit Tsutskiridze.



The new administrative building of the Bar Association, located behind Tbilisi city court, includes two floors and a terrace. The triangular architectural concept of the building is symbolic and involves three actors of justice: the bar, the court and the prosecutor's office.



BAR ASSOCIATION REACHED AGREEMENT WITH SPECIAL PENITENTIARY SERVICE TO SIMPLIFY VISITING RULES IN PRISONS FOR LAWYERS UNDER NEWCOVID REGULATIONS

Because of the restrictions due to the pandemic, the penitentiary has enacted new regulations regarding visits to prisons.

The Bar Association negotiated with the Penitentiary Service to ease the newly imposed restrictions on lawyers.

According to the agreement between the parties, it is not obligatory for the lawyers to submit the Covid-test result during the visit to the facility with the client behind the protective barrier, and lawyers are allowed to meet the clients only after the temperature control.



As for the face-to-face meeting with the client, it is mandatory for all visitors to submit a negative PCR test in the last 72 hours,

In order to facilitate this process for lawyers, GBA has signed an agreement with the medical center "Cito" for a special discount rates for lawyers to take PCR tests.

ACCORDING THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE BAR ASSOCIATION AND THE MEDICAL INSTITUTION "CITO", **LAWYERS CAN TAKE THE PCR TEST AT HALF PRICE, UP TO 60 GEL.**

THE BAR ASSOCIATION PRESENTED THE ASSESSMENT OF THE CANDIDATES FOR THE SUPREME COURT



The Executive Board of the Georgian Bar Association has approved a working group on the selection process of judges of the Supreme Court, which was formed from the members of the Justice and Judicial Reform Committee of the Association.

The Working Group evaluated the judges of the Supreme Court on the basis of interviews with the High Council of Justice of Georgia and observations of the hearing in the Parliament of Georgia, using fair and objective criteria and methodology developed with the support of experts from USAID / PROLoG and the American Bar Association (ABA).

The assessments of the candidates for judges of the Supreme Court was submitted to the Parliament of Georgia.

The document is posted on the GBA's website.

WORKING GROUP ON ELECTORAL SYSTEM REFORM HELD A MEETING

With the support of the Council of Europe and USAID / PROLoG, a regular meeting of the Bar Association Working Group on Electoral System Reform was held.

At the meeting, the members of the working group discussed the challenges and shortcomings related to the election processes of the Chairman of the Bar Association and the governing bodies and identified future activities.

Once the working group concludes the work on the system, active meetings will begin with the members of the GBA throughout Georgia to inform them about and discuss the new electoral system.

The working group consists of representatives of the Bar Association, the Legal Aid Service, international organizations and the non-governmental sector, as well as local and international experts from the CCBE and the United States.



A special, online questionnaire was also developed to identify members' views on the process. The questionnaire was sent to all members of the GBA for feedback.

WORKING MEETING ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEES

The issues related to the structure of the committees of the Bar Association, the means of increasing their activities and efficiency were discussed at the working meeting by the members of the Executive Board. Jonathan Goldsmith, an international expert from the Council of Europe, presented the results and recommendations of the study.



WORKSHOP ON REVIEWING AND DISCUSSING THE NEW COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Workshop on reviewing and discussing the new communication strategy and action plan of the Bar Association.

The new communication strategy addresses the specific issues and directions that are particularly important for the effective communication and positioning of the Association in relation to the specific target groups with which the Association cooperates.



The expert also developed the Action Plan for the Bar Association for the next 2 years. The new communication strategy was developed with the support of the Council of Europe.



BAR EXAMS

The Bar Association held another session of the Bar Exams. Exam sessions began on July 23 and lasted through July 29. Qualification exams were conducted in full compliance with Covid regulations. 663 persons participated in the examinations in the fields of general law, criminal law and civil law specialization. Among them, 166 participants successfully passed the exam. The Bar Association congratulates them on this success!



Exams were conducted in full compliance with the Covid regulations.



EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

During the reporting period, new trainings selected as a result of needs assessment of lawyers were published for enrollment on the Lawyer's E-Portal.

The modules developed for each training is tailored to the specifics of the lawyers' activities. Trainings are conducted both remotely and in the physical space. New trainings are gradually added to the existing ones.

During the reporting period, 18 trainings were conducted within the framework of continuing legal education.



An additional 94 advocates received license for practice on cases involving children (civil law), and an additional 64 advocates were licensed to practice on cases related to juvenile justice (criminal law)