

Featured Articles

Scribes Goes Online with New Website

Being of Service

Do You SSRN?

*Institutional Member Profile:
California Western Law School*

Scribes Goes Online with New Website

If you haven't seen it yet, go to www.scribes.org and rediscover Scribes—the American Society of Legal Writers. You'll find a redesigned website—a new, improved, attractive, and easy-to-use gateway to your organization. The process took almost two years, about \$4,500, and the dedication and hard work of several people.

Early in 2009, the Scribes board of directors began the search for a website developer. The board rejected one proposal at the board meeting at St. Louis University in March. So the Scribes' website committee literally went back to the drawing board (or, more specifically, the computer screen).

In April 2009, Christopher Wren, chair of the Scribes website committee, asked each board member to recommend websites that he or she thought were well designed and why. Executive Director Norm Plate asked his law students for website recommendations, too. From this wealth of information, spanning the generations of present and future Scribes members, several website developers emerged. In September 2009, Chris Wren sent a request for proposal to three. Two website developers submitted proposals, and in November 2009, the board selected Chicago-based Promet Source.

Consultation with Promet started in December 2009; the new website was introduced in December 2010.

A very busy year of website development

Between the holidays of 2009 and 2010, Chris Wren, Scribes administrative assistant Rebecca McAlpine, and

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The President's Column: Being of Service

by Steven Smith, California Western School of Law

It's good for any organization to periodically take stock and think of the future, and Scribes is no exception. We are about to consider our future, and we need your help.

From its founding sixty years ago (thanks to Chief Justice Arthur T. Vanderbilt), Scribes has sought to honor legal writers and "encourage a clear, succinct, and forceful style in legal writing." (If you are interested in a brief history of Scribes, see our website at <http://www.scribes.org/history>.) Over the years, the organization has promoted these goals by offering writers support and fellowship, publishing important books and journals about writing, giving awards for outstanding legal writing (see <http://www.scribes.org/scribes-awards>), and recognizing the achievements of great writers. During most of our history, we have been an organization of individual members; recently, though, our growth in membership has been primarily from "institutional members"—law schools and courts. (Institutional members are listed on our website at <http://www.scribes.org/institutional-members> and on page 9 of this issue of *The Scrivener*.)

If that is our past and present, what is our future? There are many parts to that question. Should we, for example, change the goals of Scribes? In light of new means of communication, should we change the way we approach the improvement of legal writing? Who should be members of Scribes, and how do we get them to join us?

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Promet were very busy. In early January 2010, Promet submitted two designs. Based on feedback from Scribes President Stuart Shiffman, Scribes Vice President Steve Smith, Scribes Executive Director Norm Plate, former Scribes Executive Director Joe Kimble, and Rebecca McAlpine, Promet submitted three additional designs. In an e-mail vote in late January, the Scribes board selected its favorite design from among the five submissions.

Once the board made its choice, Promet, Chris Wren, and Rebecca McAlpine began a months-long process of transferring content from the old website to the new one and refining the site's design and features. Countless phone conferences required all to be online simultaneously to discuss individual screens, text editing, drop-downs, and so on. Promet trained Rebecca to be Scribes' own webmaster; she's now responsible for website maintenance.

In October 2010, as the new website neared completion, a snag remained: integrating an online payment system via PayPal. Ben Wilson, a recent law-school grad, came to the rescue. A student-editor member of Scribes while at Saint Louis University School of Law, Ben wanted to remain a member of Scribes after he graduated. When he heard that Scribes was working on a new website, he offered his help. Ben understood HTML coding. With the committee

struggling to integrate PayPal into the new website, Ben's offer of assistance was timely. With the permission of Scribes president, Dean Steve Smith, Ben became a member of the website committee. And it wasn't long before he had PayPal up and running.

Finally, in early December, Chris submitted the website to the board for the members' final review. After a few tweaks, Chris was delighted to notify board members shortly before Christmas that Scribes' new site was up and running. Chris sent an announcement about the new website to the LRWPROF-L e-mail discussion group for teachers of legal writing and research. About the same time, notices about the new website also appeared on the Legal Writing Prof blog and the Legal Skills Prof blog.

"With the design and technology assistance of Promet, and with a lot of hard work by Scribes' board of directors, staff, and volunteers, Scribes is delighted to present a contemporary webface that reflects the character and purposes of the organization," Chris said. "We also know, however, that this kind of creative work benefits from continuing review and improvement. So as the site evolves, we look forward to offering our members and visitors additional features and services."

So go ahead—take a look at Scribes' new site. Tell us what you think. Send any comments and suggestions to Rebecca or Chris; you'll find their e-mail addresses on the website. And remember to make www.scribes.org one of your "favorites."



The opening screen of the new website, www.scribes.org, introduced in December 2010.

(The President's Column *continued from page 1*)

Scribes is undertaking a planning process. Our Board of Directors will discuss the future of the organization at our spring meeting. (The officers and directors of Scribes are listed on our website at <http://www.scribes.org/officers-and-directors>, as well as on page 10 of this issue.) Darby Dickerson has agreed to chair our planning effort to consider how we can ensure that Scribes promotes clear legal writing over the next decade.

That is where we would like your help. How can Scribes serve you? Let us know what you think Scribes should become and how we should improve the profession. Send any suggestions to our home office (see the *Contact Us* page on the website, <http://www.scribes.org/contact-us>), Darby Dickerson (darby@law.stetson.edu), or me (ssmith@cwsl.edu). This is the time to dream about what we can do, and then find a way to do it well. We look forward to your thoughts, creative ideas, and dreams about what our organization can become.



If it seems to you that this article cites the Scribes website a great deal, that is because we are proud of the new and improved webpages. We are most grateful to the tireless work of Christopher Wren (our web architect), who has chaired our effort to provide a new website. Thanks also to Ben Wilson and Norm Plate, who helped cover the million details that went into it. Read more about it in this issue.

New Members

Stuart Friedman (Livonia, Michigan)
Daniel Garabedian (Brussels, Belgium)
Dawn Goulet (Chicago, Illinois)
Benjamin Greer (Elk Grove, California)
Lisa R. Hasday (Dallas, Texas)
Regina Horton (Torrance, California)
Patrick J. Long (Buffalo, New York)
Joi Montiel (Montgomery, Alabama)
Craig Ready* (Baltimore, Maryland)
Sherri Renner (Lakewood, Colorado)
Adam Schlosser (Washington, DC)
Trent West* (Howell, Michigan)
Mark S. Wilkinson (Chicago, Illinois)

* Student member.

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Submit Your Articles

Please send items for upcoming issues of *The Scrivener* (electronically) to the e-mail address shown below.

Deadlines

Spring	April 15
Summer	July 15
Fall	October 15

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Help Scribes Grow

Would you be willing to help promote Scribes? Do you have friends or colleagues who might like to join? Will you be speaking at or attending any program involving legal writing or legal language? We would be happy to send you some of the attractive Scribes brochures to distribute. Just send an e-mail to our executive director, Norman E. Plate: platen@cooley.edu.

Do You SSRN?

by Norman Otto Stockmeyer*

After the drudgery of research, the tedium of writing and rewriting, and the agony of awaiting an editor's decision comes—we authors hope—the joy of seeing our manuscript published. But how soon the thrill is gone. Before long, readers have tossed the periodical, and our article is history.

If the article is published in a law review or journal, it remains retrievable online through searchable subscription databases such as Westlaw, Lexis, and Hein. But those databases are not accessible to non-subscribers. And many authors write articles for a host of “second-tier” legal magazines and newsletters that are not available through the online services. Those articles are gone for good, except perhaps in the musty stacks of the relatively few law libraries that archive such ephemera.

Wouldn't it be great if we could upload digital copies of our articles to a website that is accessible to all, free of charge, and Google-searchable? Thanks to the Social Science Research Network (SSRN), such an open-access electronic repository does exist.

Here's how it works. Once you create your personal SSRN archive (“author page”), you can link to it from your e-mail signature block or website bio. Then with one click, e-mail recipients and website visitors can call up a bibliography of your articles. With another click, they can download a PDF facsimile of any article as it originally appeared in print. All free; no subscription or special software required. Moreover, your archived articles are available to researchers using SSRN's search function or Google.

What is SSRN?

SSRN is a website that maintains an “eLibrary” of research in 18 social-science disciplines (“networks”), including law. Its Legal Scholarship Network is the largest and most popular open-access repository of legal scholarship, and it constitutes about 25 percent of all SSRN content. If you are a law professor, you probably already know about SSRN. The purpose of this article is to introduce SSRN's archival function to other legal writers.

SSRN's stated mission is to provide rapid worldwide distribution of research to authors and their readers. To this end, it allows authors to upload abstracts and the full text of unpublished “working papers” (draft manuscripts) and “accepted papers” (articles published or accepted for publication). This is done through the SSRN User Headquarters, accessible at <http://hq.ssrn.com> (free registration required). And every uploaded document (“eprint”) is downloadable for free by anyone with an Internet connection and PDF reader.

As of the close of 2010, SSRN's eLibrary contained the full text of more than 314,000 documents from 149,000 authors. Downloads are running at a rate of more than 10 million a year. The SSRN eLibrary can be accessed at <http://ssrn.com/search> (no registration required). In addition to traditional articles, it contains everything from op-ed columns and written testimony at a hearing to amicus briefs and entire books.

SSRN keeps a running count of the number of times each document is downloaded. SSRN uses these counts to generate lists of the most-downloaded documents, authors, and institutions. As you might expect of our rankings-obsessed profession, SSRN counts are increasingly being used as a measure of scholarly productivity and influence.

In 2009, SSRN itself was ranked sixth on the top-ten list of “The Most Important Developments in the Legal Academy Since 2000” by the readers of Brian Leiter's popular Law School Reports blog.

How to upload an article

Get started by writing an abstract for your article (250 to 400 words is the ideal length). One caveat: both SSRN and Google search abstracts, not the full text of articles. So draft your abstract with future researchers in mind. It's best to compose your abstract in Word, spell-check it, and then copy-and-paste it into the box provided, rather than typing it in freehand.

Have handy your article's citation and an electronic version of the article in PDF format. (You may be able to obtain a PDF by e-mail from the editor or publisher. If not, clip the pages from the periodical and run them through a scanner. Or ask your IT professional for help.) Once you have made these preparations, you can upload an article in ten minutes or less. Here's how:

First, establish a free SSRN account, with a username and password, at www.ssrn.com. Then log in to SSRN User Headquarters at <http://hq.ssrn.com>

and go to *My Papers*. Click on *Start New Submission* and then grant a click-through license for SSRN to distribute your article.

Next, upload the PDF of your article, which is as easy as e-mailing an attachment. Then enter the title, citation, abstract, and a few descriptive keywords for search-engine indexing (clicking *save* as you go). Finally, pick one or more abstracting eJournals from a drop-down menu (or let SSRN do it for you) and click on *Submit to SSRN*.

What are eJournals? SSRN's eJournals periodically disseminate batches of newly posted abstracts by e-mail to subscribers, who can then access articles by clicking on the abstract. The Legal Scholarship Network offers more than 125 subject-matter eJournals; you can request to have your abstract distributed by as many as 12 of them. This has the potential to greatly expand your article's readership. (Although SSRN encourages authors to upload older articles, those more than 12 months old at the time of submission will not be distributed in eJournals.)

Uploaded documents are not accessible immediately upon being submitted. Instead, they are subject to a cursory review by SSRN staff before public release, a process that can take 24 to 48 hours. The staff may edit an abstract and will occasionally reject a submission as insufficiently scholarly.

Once a document is uploaded and reviewed, it can be cited and retrieved by its abstract number. For example, <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1569003> will take you to my article on Laurance M. Hyde from the Winter 2010 issue of *The Scrivener*. (Searchers can download an article only after viewing its abstract. About one in five SSRN abstract views results in a download.)

SSRN's other uses

This article is about archiving published articles. But you can also post drafts of articles ("working papers") on SSRN. Views differ on the wisdom of this practice if your ultimate goal is publication in a traditional ink-on-paper periodical. Some scholars post such "preprints" to preempt a hot topic, and sometimes the postings will result in an offer of publication. But other times, editors may reject a submission that has been previously posted on SSRN. If a posted draft is published, etiquette requires you to replace it with a "postprint" of the published version.

For one reason or another, your goal may be merely to self-publish an article on the Internet. SSRN facilitates that, too. Produce your article in Word—editing, spell-checking, and grammar-checking carefully, because no copyeditor will be flyspecking your work—then convert the Word document to PDF and submit it to SSRN as described above, picking the most appropriate eJournal(s) to have it abstracted in.

While this form of "green" publishing probably will not count for law-school promotion and tenure purposes, it gets your scholarship "out there" through SSRN's eJournals, while saving the time and expense of editors, printers, postal workers, and recyclers.

Finally, SSRN can be useful for research. Indeed, anyone seriously considering writing a scholarly article for publication would be neglectful not to research the topic in SSRN's eLibrary. SSRN permits searching by title, abstract, or author's name. Clicking on an article's title brings up the abstract, as well as the option to download the article. Clicking on the author's name reveals all other articles that the author has posted, as well as the author's affiliation and contact information, including e-mail address.

Here are some helpful sources I found on SSRN in the process of writing this article:

- Susan Duncan, "Demystifying the SSRN Process: How to Make It Work for You," <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1166022>
- Carol Parker, "Institutional Repositories and the Principle of Open Access: Changing the Way We Think About Legal Scholarship," <http://ssrn.com/abstract=928489>
- Stephanie L. Plotin, "Legal Scholarship, Electronic Publishing, and Open Access: Transformation or Steadfast Stagnation?" <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1350138>
- Victor Ricciardi, "A Workshop on the Social Science Research Network," <http://ssrn.com/abstract=879685>

As *Google* did, SSRN has become so commonplace in academic circles that it is being used as a verb. With that thought in mind—and this guide in hand—you can now begin to SSRN your articles.

* Norman Otto Stockmeyer has gone emeritus after more than three decades of teaching at Thomas M. Cooley Law School, with visiting stints at Mercer University and California Western. His SSRN author page is at <http://ssrn.com/author=80303>.

Profiles of Our Institutional Members:

California Western Law School

California Western Law School joined Scribes as an institutional member in 1996. The school's motto is "what law school ought to be"; with the school's location in San Diego, California, it's hard to imagine a more sunny place to study law.

San Diego boasts average temperatures that range from 65 degrees in January to 77 degrees in August. Fifty miles of beaches are nearby, and 267 days of sunshine a year make all that sand perfect for beachgoers. A 90-minute drive takes you to the spectacular scenery of the Anza-Borrego Desert. Nearby mountains offer hiking in summer and skiing from fall to spring.

Sounds perfect for living, but what about teaching and studying law? California Western, perhaps inspired by its beautiful and varied surroundings, stresses "creative problem-solving" for lawyers. The school sees law as a helping profession; the school's mission is to use the law to solve society's problems.

California Western was established in 1924, making it the oldest law school in San Diego. Originally part of California Western University, the school was accredited by the ABA in 1962 and by the AALS in 1967. In 1968, California Western University changed its name to the United States International University, but the law school kept the original name. Then, in 1975, the law school ended the affiliation and became independent. Today it is one of a few independent not-for-profit law schools in the U.S.

In 1993, California Western opened a new administrative and campus center. In 2000, the school opened its new law library, dedicated by United States Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy.

Today, California Western educates about 900 students. The average age is 27; the student body is multicultural, with one-third of all students representing minorities. Fifty-two percent of all students are women. California Western alumni live in 49 states and 35 foreign countries. And of those alumni, more than 100 are federal and state court judges.

The school's faculty of 43 full-time professors teach classes toward the J.D., LL.M. (in trial advocacy), and M.C.L./LL.M. (for foreign law graduates). Students can participate in clinical internship programs and several research centers and institutes, including the Center for Creative Problem Solving, the National Center for Preventive Law, and the California Innocence Project. The school publishes the *California Western Law Review* and the *California Western International Law Journal*.

The Dean of California Western is Steven R. Smith, who is also the current president of Scribes. As Dean Smith says, California Western is "proud of our heritage and of being a 'big-picture' law school. We take our mission—to educate lawyers to be members of a helping profession—very seriously." So California Western is "what law school ought to be"—and where law school ought to be, too.



Member News

Emmanuel, Sheppard & Condon announced the addition of **Brian J. Hooper** as an associate attorney with their firm. Brian is a commercial litigator with more than ten years' experience in the public and private sectors. Brian earned his law degree from Harvard Law School, where he served as Deputy Editor-in-Chief of the *Harvard Journal of Law & Public Policy*. He graduated *summa cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa from Washington and Lee University. Brian will practice in the areas of construction law, contract and commercial litigation, government and administrative law, and trial law.

James A. Johnson, a trial lawyer of Southfield, Michigan, has published two articles in the *Michigan Bar Journal*:

Persuasion in Opening Statement (Jan. 2011) and *Jury Argument* (Feb. 2011)

Congratulations to our own **Mark Wojcik**. Mark was elected as the new chair of the Association of American Law Schools' Section on Legal Writing, Reasoning, and Research. You may have previously known him as a legal-writing professor at The John Marshall Law School and a coeditor of the Legal Writing Prof Blog. He will serve as chair until the next AALS meeting in January 2012.

Mark has previously chaired other AALS sections, including the AALS Section on International Law, the Section on Graduate Programs for Foreign Lawyers, and the Section on North American Cooperation.

Life Members

David Abney (Phoenix, Arizona)
Glen-Peter Ahlers (Orlando, Florida)
Frank L. Branson (Dallas, Texas)
Lee C. Buchheit
(New York, New York)
Christopher Camardello
(Minneapolis, Minnesota)
Michael J. Collins (Dallas, Texas)
Judge Deborah Cook (Akron, Ohio)
Willard H. DaSilva
(Garden City, New York)
Jeffrey A. Dennis-Strathmeyer
(Pleasant Hill, California)
Kathryn Diaz
(New York, New York)
Anthony Gair
(New York, New York)
Bryan A. Garner (Dallas, Texas)
Judge Lynn N. Hughes
(Houston, Texas)

Judge Michael B. Hyman
(Chicago, Illinois)
Emil L. Iannelli
(Southampton, Pennsylvania)
Lynne P. Iannelli
(Southampton, Pennsylvania)
Joseph Kimble (Lansing, Michigan)
J.D. Lee (Knoxville, Tennessee)
Mark Levine (Denver, Colorado)
Molly Lien (Traverse City, Michigan)
Philip K. Lyon (Nashville, Tennessee)
Robert N. Markle (Fairfax, Virginia)
Bernard S. Meyer (deceased)
(Mineola, New York)
Steven F. Molo
(New York, New York)
Richard L. Neumeier
(Boston, Massachusetts)
Judge Mark P. Painter
(Cincinnati, Ohio)

K. David Roberts
(Oklahoma City, Oklahoma)
J.G. "Jerry" Schulze
(Little Rock, Arkansas)
Keldon K. Scott (Lansing, Michigan)
Alexander M. Selkirk
(San Antonio, Florida)
Gary D. Spivey (Albany, New York)
Tina L. Stark
(New York, New York)
Paul R. Steadman (Chicago, Illinois)
Thomas M. Steele (deceased)
(Winston-Salem, North Carolina)
Norman Otto Stockmeyer
(Lansing, Michigan)
Preston Torbert (Chicago, Illinois)
Anthony Turley (Toledo, Ohio)
Daniel Wallen
(New York, New York)

2010–2011 Committees

Annual Meeting

Charles Dewey Cole (Cochair)
dcole@nfam.com

Stuart Shiffman (Cochair)
msshiffman74@sbcglobal.net

Glen-Peter Ahlers, James C. Parker, Hon. Lee Rosenthal, Otto Stockmeyer, and John Wierzbicki

Book Award

Hon. Michael Hyman (Chair)
hymikeb@aol.com

Bryan Garner, Yoshinori H.T. Himel, Steve Sheppard, Stuart Shiffman, Jane Siegel, and Richard Wydick

Brief-Writing Award

Hon. Kenneth Gartner (Chair)
kgartner@tourolaw.edu

Beth Cohen, Charles Dewey Cole, Stephen Fink, Michael Fried, Susan Joffe, Robert Markle, Laurel Oates, Hon. Mark Painter, Hon. Lee Rosenthal, and Robert M. Shaughnessy

Law-Review Award

Mary Bowman (Chair)
bowmanm1@seattleu.edu

Glen-Peter Ahlers, Steven Feldman, Richard Leiter, and Richard Wydick

Lifetime-Achievement Award

Bryan Garner (Chair)
bglawprose@yahoo.com

Hon. Mark Painter, Hon. Lee Rosenthal, Stuart Shiffman, and Richard Wydick

Membership and Outreach

Mark Wojcik (Chair)
intlawprof@gmail.com

Bradley Clary, Brian Hooper, Joe Kimble, Hon. Mark Painter, Mary Massaron Ross, Steve Smith, Gary Spivey, and John Wierzbicki

Nominating

Bryan Garner (Chair)
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Joe Kimble, Stuart Shiffman, and Steve Smith

Scribes Journal

Joe Kimble (Chair)
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Bryan Garner, Wayne Schiess, and David W. Schultz

Scrivener

Jane Siegel (Chair)
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Bryan Garner, Hon. Michael Hyman, and Steve Smith

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Ben Wilson

Institutional Members

University of Akron, C. Blake McDowell Law Center
Akron, Ohio (since 2004)

Alaska Appellate Courts
Anchorage, Alaska (since 2005)

University of Arkansas at Little Rock,
William H. Bowen School of Law
Little Rock, Arkansas (since 2007)

Barry University,
Dwayne O. Andreas School of Law
Orlando, Florida (since 2002)

California Western School of Law
San Diego, California (since 1996)

The Catholic University of America,
Columbus School of Law
Washington, D.C. (since 2007)

Chapman University School of Law
Orange, California (since 2002)

Charlotte School of Law
Charlotte, North Carolina (since 2008)

Chicago-Kent College of Law
Illinois Institute of Technology
Chicago, Illinois (since 2006)

Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania (since 2005)

Duke University School of Law
Durham, North Carolina (since 2008)

Florida Coastal School of Law
Jacksonville, Florida (since 2002)

Golden Gate University
San Francisco, California (since 2006)

Hofstra University School of Law
Hempstead, New York (since 2007)

University of Houston Law Center
Houston, Texas (since 2002)

The John Marshall Law School
Chicago, Illinois (since 2004)

University of La Verne College of Law
Ontario, California (since 2003)

Lewis & Clark Law School
Portland, Oregon (since 2004)

Mercer University School of Law
Macon, Georgia (since 2009)

University of Missouri-Columbia School of Law
Columbia, Missouri (since 2008)

University of Nevada, Las Vegas,
William S. Boyd School of Law
Las Vegas, Nevada (since 2006)

Northern Kentucky University College of Law,
Salmon P. Chase College of Law
Highland Heights, Kentucky (since 2002)

Oklahoma City University School of Law
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (since 2004)

The University of Oklahoma Law Center
Norman, Oklahoma (since 2006)

Pace University School of Law
White Plains, New York (since 2007)

Saint Louis University School of Law
St. Louis, Missouri (since 1990)

Seattle University School of Law
Seattle, Washington (since 2001)

South Texas College of Law
Houston, Texas (since 2006)

Southwestern Law School
Los Angeles, California (since 1990)

Stetson University College of Law
St. Petersburg, Florida (since 1990)

Suffolk University Law School
Boston, Massachusetts (since 2009)

Supreme Court of Texas
Austin, Texas (since 2006)

Syracuse University College of Law
Syracuse, New York (since 2004)

The University of Texas School of Law
Austin, Texas (since 1991)

Texas Wesleyan University School of Law
Fort Worth, Texas (since 2007)

Thomas M. Cooley Law School
Lansing, Michigan (since 1991)

Thomson West
Rochester, New York (since 2007)

Valparaiso University School of Law
Valparaiso, Indiana (since 2008)

Washburn University School of Law
Topeka, Kansas (since 2001)

Western New England College School of Law
Springfield, Massachusetts (since 2000)

William Mitchell College of Law
St. Paul, Minnesota (since 2001)

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An Invitation to Membership in

Scribes —

The American Society of Legal Writers

Any member of the legal profession is eligible to join Scribes. You may join as a regular member if you have published or if you have edited a legal journal. Otherwise, you may join as an associate member. The dues are the same, and associate members receive essentially the same benefits as regular members.

Please print or type:

Your Name

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