

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Trial Skills Academy added to Primerus' offerings

Among a host of new initiatives in 2025, Primerus will offer a Trial Skills Academy this fall in Philadelphia, a city with a rich legal history and where the Constitution of the United States was created.

The inaugural event will be staged over a three-day period in September and is designed to help sharpen the courtroom skills of attorneys across the age and experience spectrums. The Academy will be tailored for three distinct groups: (1) Highly-accomplished trial attorneys, the "superstar" litigators; (2) Seasoned professionals who are seeking more courtroom experience and guidance; and (3) Young lawyers in need of trial know-how and hands-on opportunities.

Participants will be actively engaged in practical exercises and simulations, gaining experience in applying legal theory to real-world scenarios. In concept, the training program mirrors what has been the traditional model in the world of aviation, where commercial airline pilots undergo recurrent training twice a year to keep their flying skills and aeronautical knowledge razor sharp.

New Jersey attorney Tom Paschos, head of the Haddonfield law firm that bears his name, has helped spearhead the creation of the Trial Skills Academy, where experienced legal professionals and trial experts from within the Primerus community will provide personalized feedback and insights to help participants

grow as litigators. The team of experts that we have assembled from Primerus are among the finest in the profession and are committed to passing the torch of legal excellence to their brethren.

In addition, the Academy will help Primerus attorneys take a deep dive into essential trial techniques, including the art of jury selection, opening statements, evidence presentation, objections, direct and cross-examinations, trial motions, and closing arguments.

Gaining experience in virtually all of those areas has been difficult to come by over the past three decades, as the vast majority of cases involving civil litigation are settled after the discovery stage. For those cases that do make it to trial, the presence of a skilled and respected trial attorney on your side can markedly improve the chances of winning, as the triers of fact often can be swayed by the advocate deemed more trustworthy, relatable, and credible.

Much of the learning by participants will take place in the months leading up to the climactic three-day session in September, as various Zoom seminars will be offered monthly by trial experts willing to share their time-honored techniques.

Then, participants will receive a hypothetical case to consider, dividing into two- or three-person teams representing either the plaintiff or defendant. The fact pattern for the



case could involve a business dispute, a personal injury claim, a product liability matter, or a medical malpractice scenario. In each case, the teams will need to develop their legal theories and strategies to prevail at trial and will be fully immersed in a courtroom experience – from voir dire to verdict.

Following the trial, experts will provide critical feedback to participants, assessing participant's courtroom skills for their future benefit. Each trial will be video recorded, allowing participants to study their performances and to address areas for improvement.

This opportunity to invest in your legal career is just one of many new initiatives that Primerus is unveiling this year.

The list includes continuing upgrades to the Primerus website, efforts designed to further enhance search engine optimization for member firms. The website will soon feature foreign language capabilities along with expanded law firm profiles containing more content, photos, and videos.

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Primerus also is in a growth mode, moving into smaller markets across the U.S. by restructuring our licensing agreements for law firms located in local communities. The move coincides with our plan to reach into the consumer markets of the legal profession, covering such areas as family law, immigration law, criminal law, estate planning, and labor law.

The push to expand also will take place across Europe, particularly in the four most populated countries

of Germany, France, Italy, and Great Britain. In each of those nations, we will seek to expand into major cities, establishing a presence that will further build the Primerus brand and drive referral business to member firms while encouraging collaboration.

Relatedly, we will continue to step up our involvement with various client organizations, including the Association of Corporate Counsel (ACC), aggressively pursuing opportunities for client development.

In short, we expect that 2025 will be an exciting year in the world of Primerus, filled with opportunities where members can play major roles in programs promoting individual and organizational growth.

Best regards,

Jack Buchanan, President