



# AMERICAN INNS *of* COURT

WILLIAM A. INGRAM INN

*No. 30012 - Founded 1985*

*San Jose, California*

Monthly Program Structure and Development

## **1. PURPOSE OF PUPILLAGE GROUPS AND MONTHLY PROGRAMS**

The Ingram Inn of Court seeks to promote civility, collegiality, professionalism, ethics and advocacy skills within the legal profession, primarily through education and mentoring activities.

During our annual sessions, which begin in September and end the following May, we meet as a group eight times, once each month (except for December). Our first and last meetings, which include dinner, generally feature prominent speakers addressing contemporary developments in ethics and professionalism. In addition, our January gathering takes place at the annual Ingram Symposium at Santa Clara University, sponsored by the Santa Clara Law School and honoring the legacy of Judge William A. Ingram, one of the founding members of this chapter of the American Inns of Court.

The core of the Ingram Inn and the focus of our meetings are the five pupillage groups that are responsible for presenting one program each during our meetings. The planning and presentation of the programs require the involvement of every member in each of the pupillage groups, who must plan, prepare, and perform the programs.

At the meetings where the programs are performed, we encourage participation and input from audience members, who speak about their experiences and thoughts concerning the topic at issue. This interaction helps build cohesion and lasting relationships, while promoting civility, professionalism and ethical behavior.

## **2. STRUCTURE OF PUPILLAGE GROUPS**

Each pupillage group consists of three sections: (1) the team leaders, (2) the “Bencher” and “Barristers,” and (3) the law students. The team leaders include one judge and one experienced attorney, who have demonstrated their commitment to the Ingram Inn by their active and ongoing participation in previous years. Team leaders are responsible for guiding the development and performance of each program.

Bencher include judges, attorneys, and law professors who have at least 15 years of legal experience after admission to the Bar. Barristers, in the Ingram Inn, are attorneys who do not qualify as Bencher. We have 10-12 Bencher and Barristers in each group.

Our law students include eight pupils each from Santa Clara University, Stanford University, and Lincoln Law School. Each pupillage group has 4-5 law students.

### **3. STRUCTURE OF PROGRAMS**

Our meetings take place on the second Wednesday of each month. We open our doors at 5:30 p.m. so that members can socialize and relax with each other before formal proceedings begin. The meeting starts at 6:00 p.m., usually with a brief description of Inn business and introduction of guests. The programs generally start around 6:15 p.m. and last for one hour, which includes questions and audience participation.

Each pupillage group is responsible for presenting a program that explores important and timely legal issues, emphasizing civility, collegiality, professionalism, ethics and advocacy skills (or the lack thereof). In addition, the program must qualify for Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) credits by presenting an issue that educates the audience. MCLE forms and sign-up sheets are provided at the meetings.

Many people drawn to the legal profession enjoy drama and good storytelling, as well as competition. Since one of our programs won the national award for best program in the American Inn of Court in 2010, we have seen an ongoing effort from each pupillage group to try and top the preceding program, in both content and entertainment value. As a result, at the last meeting of the 2011-2012 session, we will present “Ingrammy Awards” for several categories, including best acting, writing, and program. We believe that these awards will encourage ever stronger programs.

### **4. DEVELOPMENT OF PROGRAMS**

The membership of each pupillage group is announced and distributed before our first meeting of the year, so that the new pupillage group members can sit together at the dinner meeting, either to renew acquaintances or to meet new people. At subsequent meetings, pupillage groups generally do not sit together, as we encourage people to get to know as many members of the Ingram Inn as possible.

The membership of each pupillage group is announced and distributed before our first meeting of the year, so that the new pupillage group members can sit together at this dinner meeting, either to renew acquaintances or to meet new people. The judges, lawyers, and law students comprising each pupillage group work together to develop ideas, write scripts, and present a program that is both informative and entertaining. The planning sessions and meetings of the pupillage groups as they prepare the program bring together a diverse group of legal practitioners who bond and get to know each other while exploring ethical and legal conundrums.

We encourage each pupillage group to begin preparations and script writing for their program at a reasonable time, meaning at least four weeks before the meeting at which they will present, but hopefully six weeks or more. The pupillage groups generally meet, as a full group, at least two or three times before their program is presented, so that they can make assignments, review (and perhaps revise) the script, rehearse, and coordinate the production. Sub-groups, who could be responsible for different sections of the program, may meet separately from the full pupillage group.

By the time of the performance, the people presenting the program should be familiar with the script, the underlying legal issues, and their roles in the production. We do not require people to memorize lines, but are impressed whenever someone does so.

We hope that by creating, writing, and performing a program that explores an important legal and ethical issue, our members will further appreciate the importance of civil and ethical behavior in the legal profession, while building good relationships with the judges, attorneys, and law students in their pupillage group. It is important to us that each person in the group becomes involved in the program and plays a role in bringing the production to life.

## **5. OTHER PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

**The team leaders of each pupillage group are required to provide a description and working title of their program to the Program Chair of the Ingram Inn by the last week of September. Although the final program may differ from the initial title and description, we hope that the team leaders' initial choice provides each group with ideas and inspiration for an outstanding program.**

**In addition, the team leaders are required to meet with members of the Executive Committee approximately one week before the meeting, to further describe the program, to make sure it qualifies for MCLE credits, to ascertain whether any special arrangements need to be made (i.e., for video or audio equipment), and to provide copies of any materials that need to be distributed in advance.**

**A notice concerning the details of each meeting is sent to the members five to six days before each meeting. In addition, the Ingram Inn website provides information about the date, time, location, and program description for each meeting.**