

**Remarks Delivered by Justice Peter T. Zarella
to the Newly-Admitted Attorneys at the Swearing-In Ceremonies
at The Museum Of Connecticut History
on June 4, 2012**

Thank you Justice Norcott and welcome to all of you on this very exciting day.

I recently attended my son's graduation from law school. The feeling of pride in my son's accomplishments overwhelmed me. I have seen my son's analytical abilities grow and his ability to express his thoughts in a reasoned and concise manner develop from the time he first entered grade school through his time in law school and it has been a remarkable experience to witness. For it is only when you stand back over a long period of time and watch the development of someone else that you truly become aware of the miraculous transformation that takes place. Your parents, relatives and close friends, I am sure, have witnessed your development in much the same way that I noticed my son's. So it is with great pleasure that I welcome you here today and congratulate you on your years of accomplishments.

As I get older I believe it is my prerogative to give some advice - even if it is unsolicited. So here are a few suggestions.

Now that you are at this point in your life, you should take a few moments and consider what the next forty or so years will bring. Your goals to this point have been relatively short term and it is useful, on occasion, to take a step back and look at the long term. For it is the long term view that establishes a successful path through life and helps to smooth over the short term bumps and pitfalls that seem so overwhelming but generally are exaggerated in the overall scheme of things. You have made many good decisions in your life that have brought you to this day. You chose to go to college and on to law school and you should be pleased with those choices. Even if you have decided that the practice of law is not what you wish to do, you still have obtained an education that will open any number of exciting possibilities in other disciplines. Do not, however, decide against the practice of law because of the current economic conditions or the fact that you have not yet found a position. Do not let these conditions make that decision for you. If you wish to be a lawyer you can be a lawyer. If you love the law then you should be a lawyer. These present economic conditions will pass for, as permanent as they may seem, they are truly transitory. If you let these times dampen your spirits and deaden your desire to practice law, then short term conditions will have affected your long term goals. This could lead to serious regrets years from now.

My second bit of advice is simple. The truly successful person in life, in any discipline, recognizes that the process of education never ends. You need to continue to learn about human nature, to expand your knowledge into areas that you heretofore have had little contact, and to maintain currency in your chosen discipline. I can tell you with great assurance that the legal profession has many opportunities both formal and informal for you to continue to learn and grow. Many law firms have in-house mentoring

programs that help you get acclimated to the new world that you are entering. Both state and local bar associations offer formal programs to continue your education as well as mentoring programs. You should immediately consider joining the state and local bar associations as they are great opportunities to network, to continue your education, and to get to know your colleagues.

Next I urge you to cherish all of life's good experiences and learn from the bad ones, because, if you do, they all will make you a better person and a better lawyer. Life's lessons cannot be learned in law books. Today, I urge you to seize on the substance of your experiences and use them to enrich the wisdom that you undoubtedly will discover and cultivate over the years. In the meantime, do something worthwhile to enhance this proud and noble profession: for example, call your local Legal Aid office or local bar association and ask if you can volunteer to help clients pro bono. Nothing says you have to wait until you have a job to make a difference in someone's life - especially in the lives of those who are desperate or disenfranchised. Nor can I think of a better way to network with your new colleagues and to benefit from those who have more experience. Remember the essence of being a lawyer is to use your skills to ensure that those without your training have available to them all of the rights and protections guaranteed to them under our system of laws.

In summation, I hope that you find the next forty years as exciting and fulfilling as they can possibly be and, on behalf of this court and the entire Judicial Branch, I again congratulate you and welcome you to this ancient and honorable profession of law. I wish you all good luck.