

**APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**  
**William & Mary Law Institute of Special Education Advocacy (ISEA)**

This five-day training program will include approximately 30 sessions on applicable laws, ethics, best practices in advocacy, strategies for working with parents and schools, and dispute resolution procedures, taught by national leaders in the field.

The purpose of this program is to provide training in special education advocacy to new attorneys, attorneys who are new to special education law, experienced advocates, and law students (credit & non credit). ***Please note that the Institute is looking for advocates with experience independent of employment in a school district, as we expect that our graduates assist parents in advocating for children within the community.*** If you are currently working for a school district, we recommend that you wait to apply until you are no longer working for a school district **and** have gained significant experience advocating for children in your community.

It is very important to provide complete answers to all questions, **including citations where appropriate.** Incomplete answers will result in applications being returned for completion or may not be considered.

Due to COVID-19, ISEA will be offered virtually, and will begin **Sunday, January 10, 2021 and conclude on Friday, January 15, 2021.**

**If you are accepted, your tuition payment must be received within 10 days of acceptance. Cancellations before January 1, 2021 will result in a full refund. Cancellations between January 2 and 10 will result in a \$50 cancellation fee.**

Registration is \$950 for attorneys (CLE credit is anticipated) and \$825 for advocates, and non-attorneys (CEU credit is anticipated) and non-credit seeking law students (see below if seeking law school credit). Two or more advocates or attorneys from the same organization/office will receive a 10% discount on each registration.

**Payment may be made via check or credit card. If paying by credit card, you are responsible for the additional transaction fees. There are no additional fees for paying by check.**

In general, educational and training expenses are tax deductible. Check with your accountant about deductible educational expenses that may include books, continuing education fees, and travel costs.

Law students can earn one graded credit for this course. Each law student enrolled for credit will be required to complete the pre-assigned work for ISEA, attend all ISEA sessions, and submit a paper of no fewer than ten double-spaced pages to Professor Christina Jones no later than one week after the conclusion of ISEA on a topic mutually agreed upon prior to the conclusion of ISEA. Tuition and fee information is found on this page: <http://www.wm.edu/offices/financialoperations/sa/tuition/index.php>. Non-William & Mary law students must contact Professor Christina Jones (cmjones02@wm.edu) to apply for admission to this course. William & Mary students must also contact Professor Jones prior to enrolling online.

**APPLICATION**

YOUR INFORMATION:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (home): \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (office): \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (cell): \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL DISTRICT IN WHICH YOU RESIDE: \_\_\_\_\_

EMPLOYER: \_\_\_\_\_

Please tell us how you learned about ISEA: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Note: ISEA graduates become “Ambassadors” to the community and, as such, the actions of the graduates in the future, positive or negative, impact the perception of ISEA and the PELE Clinic. With some applications, we may do additional verification of data and use internet searches, commercial or otherwise, to assist us in the decision making process.

If accepted, I agree to complete all pre-conference assigned reading and course work, attend and participate in all sessions, and complete all homework and class assignments.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**The following are required for consideration of acceptance into the Institute of Special Education Advocacy 2021:**

- **Application**
- **Resume/CV**
- **Letter of recommendation from someone familiar with your prior experience in special education advocacy**
- **2 additional professional references** (references need not submit letters of recommendation)

**\*Applications missing any of the above will not be reviewed.**

**On separate sheets of paper attached to this application, please answer the questions starting on the next page.**

1.	Why do you want to learn more about advocating for students and their parents?
2.	What experiences, skills and/or training make you a good candidate for this program?
3.	How many IEP meetings have you attended on behalf of a student with a disability? Have you participated in due process, state complaints, and/or mediation? Please provide a brief description and whether they involved your child or other children.
4.	Please disclose if you or any of your immediate family members are employed by a school district or law firm that represents school districts so that potential conflicts of interest can be identified prior.
5.	Are you a licensed attorney? If so, when and where were you licensed?
6.	Whether you are an attorney or an advocate, have you ever been disciplined by, reprimanded by, or reported to any state Bar? If so, please provide the details, jurisdiction, and resolution.
7.	Whether you are an attorney or an advocate, if you are selected for this training program, are you willing to abide by the American Bar Association's Model Rules of Professional Conduct when advocating on behalf of families? (To find those rules, simply Google "American Bar Association's Model Rules of Professional Conduct")
8.	Whether you are an attorney or an advocate, if you are selected for this training program, are you willing to abide by your State's Rules of Professional Conduct for attorneys?
9.	Does your State have Rules of Professional Conduct or its equivalent for paralegals? Please provide the legal citation.
10.	Does your state allow non-attorney advocates to practice law in the area of special education? Please provide a specific citation(s) to the state statute, regulation, or legal opinions from your state Department of Education and/or your state Attorney General.
11.	Does your state allow non-attorney advocates to represent parents in due process hearings? Please provide a specific citation(s) to the state statute, regulation, or legal opinions from your state Department of Education and/or your state Attorney General.
12.	To what extent do you believe lay advocates are engaging in the practice of law when they represent clients on special education matters? Please explain.
13.	Please explain your state's law and/or policy regarding the audio recording of IEP meetings. Please provide citation(s) to your state statute, regulation, or legal opinions from your state Department of Education and/or your state Attorney General.
14.	Is your state a one-tier or two-tier due process state?
15.	What is your understanding of the significance of a parent signing or not signing an IEP under special education law?

16.	Have you ever been arrested/charged/convicted of any felony or misdemeanor (other than traffic offenses)? If yes, explain on a separate sheet of paper.
17.	What is the most challenging issue you are facing in your advocacy practice today?
18.	<p>If you are accepted into this program, please confirm that, prior to the first class, you will have read the following and will be prepared to answer questions related to those topics:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">“Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In” by Roger Fisher and William L. Ury and Bruce Patton.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The Letter to the Stranger at:  <a href="http://www.wrightslaw.com/advoc/articles/Letter_to_Stranger.html">http://www.wrightslaw.com/advoc/articles/Letter_to_Stranger.html</a></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>Wrightslaw: From Emotions to Advocacy, 2nd Ed.</i>, pages 73 - 114 and 209 - 260.          (These pages will be provided in advance to those accepted into the ISEA program.)</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The National Association of Legal Assistant’s Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility at: <a href="https://nala.org/certification/nala-code-ethics-and-professionalresponsibility">https://nala.org/certification/nala-code-ethics-and-professionalresponsibility</a></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The American Bar Associations (ABA) Model Code of Professional Responsibility.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The ABA’s Model Guidelines for the Utilization of Paralegal Services.</p>
19.	<p>If you are accepted into this program, confirm that, prior to the first class, you will have watched the Wrights’ multi-media program titled “Understanding Your Child’s Test Scores” about the Bell Curve, standard scores, and percentile ranks and be prepared to draw the Bell Curve and log in scores from a child’s evaluation. (The multi-media file will be provided to those accepted into the Institute.)</p> <p>Please also confirm that you will complete the assigned asynchronous modules prior to our first live session on Sunday, January 10.</p>
20.	<p>We prefer applicants who have previously attended a Wrightslaw Special Education Law and Advocacy conference or other similar training programs and who have prior experience as an advocate. If you have had any such prior training, please provide the name, date, location and nature of the training. If you have yet to have such training, provide the name, date, and location of any such training you plan to attend that will occur prior to January 2021.</p>
22.	<p>On no more than one page, tell us why you want to attend the Institute, the goals you hope to meet, and how you plan to use what you learn in the Institute to aid children with disabilities and their families in special education advocacy.</p>

Please email your completed application to [pele@wm.edu](mailto:pele@wm.edu) or mail your application to:

USPS to:

PELE Clinic  
 William & Mary Law School

P.O. Box 8795  
Williamsburg, VA 23187-8795

BY OVERNIGHT CARRIER to:

PELE Clinic  
William & Mary Law School  
613 South Henry Street  
Williamsburg, VA 23185

You may also fax your application to (757) 221-1855.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling bi-monthly basis until the class is full. Early applications are strongly recommended. Please allow extra processing time if you choose to submit your application by mail.

Questions? Email us at [pele@wm.edu](mailto:pele@wm.edu).

**We will be accepting applications for our Kayla Bower Advocacy Award until December 4, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. EST.** \*The application for the award will not be considered unless accompanied by a completed ISEA application. A decision will be made by December 11, 2020, and all award applicants will be notified.

Please visit <https://law.wm.edu/academics/programs/jd/electives/clinics/specialed/isea/tuition-waiver-opportunities/index.php> for specifics regarding how to apply for this tuition waiver award.