



## PRESIDENT'S PAGE

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# The Heroes of Community Outreach

Life's most persistent and urgent question is, what are you doing for others?" said Martin Luther King, Jr. For the OCBA, the answer is simple: supporting the Community Outreach Committee.

Community Outreach pulls in hundreds of volunteers to participate in about twenty events a year. And beyond the rich rewards of "doing for others," these events can be healthy *and* fun.

Have a "play date" with kids at **Orangewood Children's Home** (helping to bring happiness to kids in foster care). Run or walk in **Race for the Cure** to raise money for breast cancer research. Package food at the **O.C. Food Bank**, or serve up warm meals for the homeless at **Someone Cares Soup Kitchen**. There are clothing drives (**Women Helping Women**), and food drives. During the holiday season, support the **Spark of Love Toy Drive**, or spearhead a **Senior Santa** effort at your office (display pink tags, each of which states a specific gift that a needy, elderly person desires—items as simple as a blanket, or vitamins). The Committee also plays a key role in the OCBA's annual charitable gala through its silent auction committee that gathers donations of all kinds to raise money for charities.

Inspired yet? Then break from your daily grind and take action.

On June 4th, we have Irvine's **Super Pet Adoption**, where you can greet arriving animals and carry them to their pens, then watch their excitement as they find new, loving homes (over 500 each year are adopted). On June 11th, help preserve the environment by joining the **Newport Back Bay Restoration**.

In July, we celebrate our nation's independence. How fitting, then, that July is our debut **Human Trafficking Task Force Drive**, to collect desperately needed items for victims of sex and labor trafficking—leggings, toiletries, underwear and socks, Target gift cards, and other everyday items that mean the world to a young person trying to escape the stranglehold of modern-day slavery. This effort is launched in conjunction with the OCBA's newly formed Human Trafficking Task Force, co-chaired by Jessica Springer and Jennifer Tennant.

Community Outreach is an all-inclusive group that welcomes all who wish to volunteer. The Committee sees a constant flux of people

from all realms of the OCBA. It is a wonderful way for OCBA members to connect with each other, and to meet many dynamic, new friends. Added bonus: You get to wear a "Raising the Bar" tee shirt, and be an official member of Team OCBA!

Have kids? Many of our events welcome children, instilling greater fun for all. Watch your kids engage in a "scavenger hunt" at **Beach Clean Up**, as they scan the sand for plastic pieces, bottle caps, Styrofoam pieces, and other garbage. This event is produced by the **Surfrider Foundation**, which helps keep our beaches pristine and protects wildlife from ingesting hazardous objects. Or feel the excitement of early morning "work on a farm" at the **Incredible Edible Farm** benefiting the Second Harvest Food Bank where you and your children over age seven can get down in the dirt to harvest carrots, celery, snap peas, and more. Teach your children to appreciate where food comes from, while imparting a sense of charitable obligation to help hungry folks in Orange County. Leave with priceless memories and pictures of your wee-ones holding up a giant squash or zucchini! And for those of us without children, it is adorable fun watching other people's kids and benefiting from their unbridled enthusiasm.

The OCBA's Community Outreach efforts are a powerful example of the OCBA's profound contributions to our community. These efforts are also a cornerstone of the OCBA's mission, part of which is to "assist the community."

I consider all the Community Outreach volunteers to be true heroes, advancing the positive image of lawyers, and making priceless contributions to our environment and the lives of people in need.

While it is impossible to mention all the fabulous volunteers herein, the chairs of the past several years deserve credit for their passionate commitment: The Hon. Sherri L. Honer; Sara L. Parker; Adam L. Johnson; Nichole M. Wong; Shirin Forootan; and Jennifer Tennant and Carley Millian (your 2017 co-chairs).

The beauty of Community Outreach is that you can join the Committee (to help plan the yearly activities), or simply participate in events as desired. If you know of a charitable endeavor that would be a good fit for OCBA lawyers to connect with, you may present it to the Committee co-chairs for consideration.

Years ago, for example, I connected Big Brothers with the OCBA, and we produced "Big for a Day" events at amusement parks, where volunteer lawyers were paired up with individual "littles" (*i.e.*, children in the Big Brothers program, who are desperate for adult mentorship). The yearly calendar is constantly shifting based on new ideas suggested by members.

So, come and join the fun. Reap the rewards of helping our community, while making new friends. You will bolster the OCBA's mission to serve our community, and further enhance the reputation of Orange County lawyers. Join Team OCBA and help us to continually "Raise the Bar"!



Team OCBA harvesting food for the needy



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