



PRESIDENT'S PAGE

NIKKI PRESLEY MILIBAND

A Traditional and Heartfelt "Thank You"

This is my last President's Page and I'm ecstatic! While writing a pleading or legal brief is second nature, what made me pause before considering a run for OCBA Secretary was the thought of writing this column. However, I must admit, I did have fun with it. Not to break with tradition, my last article is focused on saying thank you to all those who contributed to another successful year for the OCBA.

The OCBA has over 8,500 members, 26 sections, 19 committees, various task forces, a Young Lawyers Division, and a Masters Division. It has an annual budget of approximately \$2.5 million, annually holds over 400 meetings at its headquarters (and another 100-plus events elsewhere), certifies over 12,000 CLE credit hours, and conducts approximately 75 fee arbitrations. The OCBA Charitable Fund raises money for pro bono legal providers and law-related charities throughout the county. This occurs only with many attorney volunteers and dedicated OCBA staff. And I am grateful for all of you.

Our amazing CEO/Executive Director, Trudy Levindofske, is deservedly first on the "thank you" list. Trudy is the OCBA's rudder keeping us sailing in the right direction. I'm confident I have driven her crazy this year with this or that idea, and that she likely cringed every time I said, "I have an idea—what do you think about . . . ?" Trudy is well-assisted by Carole Martinez, Associate Executive Director; Dennis Slaughter, Director of Information Technology/Facilities; Shannon Pearsall, Controller; and more than twenty staff members. Many of our attorney members have worked closely with the OCBA staff and know exactly how efficient and amazing they are in ensuring this organization runs seamlessly. We are one of the few bar associations in California that is financially secure and efficiently run with a continuity of staff. This past year two OCBA staff members celebrated twenty-five-year anniversaries, two celebrated ten years, and five celebrated five years. Trudy has been with the OCBA for almost *thirty years*, and in her current position for eleven years. These individuals are responsible for the day-to-day operations of your bar association.

To the OCBA Board of Directors, our volunteer attorney leaders, and all of our volunteer members—you rock! Over 175 OCBA leadership roles are filled by volunteers each year, and this year an additional 811 members volunteered to serve on various committees, speak at CLE events, etc. As Babe Ruth said, "The way a team plays as a whole determines its success. You may have the greatest bunch of individual stars in the world, but if they don't play together, the club won't be worth a dime." The OCBA Board of Directors, indeed, has a number of individual stars, but their real strength is the way in which they play together toward the common goal of achieving the OCBA's mission: "To Enhance the System of Justice, To Support the Lawyers Who

Serve It, and To Assist the Community Served By It." Thank you to all of the OCBA section, committee, and task-force leaders, and to all of our volunteer attorney members who have given graciously and freely of their time to serve the association and its members. You have inspired me this year—each and every one of you played an enormous part in the success of the OCBA and its events. Thank you for making my job so much easier!

To the OCBA Executive Committee, you are the best, bar none! The OCBA's future is secure in the hands of our upcoming presidents—Deirdre Kelly (2019), Scott Garner (2020), Larisa Dinsmoor (2021), and Dan Robinson (2022). I look forward to all of their accomplishments.

Now a tremendous shout-out and thank you to all of the OCBA Past Presidents, whom I will soon join at their twice-annual luncheons. What an amazing group of individuals, dedicated to making the Orange County legal community a better place for all of us. Each and every OCBA Past President I reached out to was more than willing to lend a hand on a committee or task force, offer a bit of advice, plan an OCBA travel seminar, and the list goes on. There are so many of you and I apologize if I have overlooked anyone, but a special thank you to Past Presidents Price, Guilford, Miller, Hubbard, Millar, Gerard, Chairez, Reinglass, McCoy, Jackson, Wang Ekvall, Zipser, Yoder, Friedland, Aitken, Castaldi, and Murphy for taking time out of your schedules to meet and assist me in navigating my year as OCBA President. Because of all of their assistance and continued service to the OCBA, I wanted to feature them in this issue (see page 18).

Some of you might have noticed someone missing from the above list. Past President Joel Miliband gets a special (with love) thank you. He is my rock, a husband extraordinaire, unbelievably supportive, a wealth of historical OCBA knowledge, and a great first editor of these columns. It has been wonderful going through this together the second time around.

To my law partner, Robert W. Dyess, Jr., my assistant, Enrique Lugo, and all of the others at Good Wildman, who have picked up the slack while I was attending sometimes four events a day—thank you!

Finally, to all of the members of the OCBA, thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve as your OCBA President in 2018.



Nikki Presley Miliband is the OCBA's 2018 President. Nikki is also a probate and trust litigation partner at Good Wildman in Irvine. She can be reached at nikki@ocbar.org.