



PRESIDENT'S PAGE

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Law Students and New Lawyers: The Future of Our Profession

Law students and new lawyers are the future of the bar, of the Orange County legal community and, frankly, of our society in general. We want to tap into that energy and enthusiasm and help them transition into the practice of law and succeed in their legal careers. The OCBA is here to help.

In order to accomplish these goals, the OCBA will bring back the Law School Task Force, which I will chair, to oversee events and programs designed specifically to help law students. We will continue taking the OCBA to the law schools by holding events, such as Section Day and Affiliate Day, where students can meet and mingle with our Section and Affiliate leaders to gain more information about working in specific practice areas and to meet leaders of our affiliate organizations that can make the Orange County legal community a smaller and more supportive place to enter the practice of law. We will also ask our members to participate in panel discussions, presentations, mock interviews and other events at the law schools so we can help educate the next generation of lawyers on important legal and professional issues, as well as provide networking opportunities. We will have the annual law student leader mixer at the OCBA headquarters, where leaders of the student organizations at the law schools can meet OCBA Board members and other leaders of the bar, including our Young Lawyers Division, as well as each other. We will institute a mentoring program for 3Ls to be matched with practicing attorneys.

For recent law school graduates, we will host our annual Bar Waiters Mixer at OCBA offices to give support to recent grads awaiting bar results and our Bridging the Gap program.

For new lawyers, we will continue and expand the role of the Leadership Development Committee led by Dean Zipser and Mike Yoder. The goals of this committee include identifying and mentoring the next generation of bar leaders. Additionally, the Diversity Committee, led by Rick McNeil, Mei Tsang, and John Gibson, will work with the Affiliates and others to encourage a diverse group of attorneys to become more involved in OCBA and its leadership.

Our Mentoring Committee, led by Dean Zipser and Cherrie Tsai, will continue the annual mentorship program, matching new lawyers with more experienced attorneys. They will also create a new "Mentoring Café" where new attorneys can meet and have coffee with OCBA leaders in an informal setting. The editor would like to feature a Q&A-style mentoring column in this magazine, so if you are a newer attorney reading this: send her your questions! Additionally, we will create a New Attorney Academy offering classes to new lawyers to develop critical legal and professional skills and engage with practicing attorneys and judges.

The OCBA's Young Lawyer's Division (YLD) for lawyers in practice

five years or fewer continues to run five committees that focus on a variety of issues faced by lawyers as they transition into the profession and the local bar: Social, Diversity & Inclusion, Community Outreach, Education, and Sports & Fitness. This year, YLD's first Community Outreach event will be a 5K event where volunteers will raise funds for local charities. YLD will also host four Education seminars. Many other events are planned for an engaging year: a Ducks Game, the second annual YLD & Affiliate Bar Meet and Greet Social, YLD's year-round softball team, Angels Game Night, Day at the Races in Del Mar, VLI's Lawyers for Warriors event, all-new Casino Night, and more.

YLD will also continue to engage the broader OCBA community through its joint programs with the Masters Division, providing opportunities for new attorneys to meet and network with more seasoned attorneys through informal programs such as the popular Trivia Night. It will also continue to co-host the annual Circle of Counsel event with the Corporate Counsel Section, put on by former OCBA Corporate Counsel Section Chair Christina Zabat-Fran, where new lawyers can meet with in-house counsel and find out about this career path. Additionally, OCBA Section Leaders will speak at YLD's May 7th Quarterly Business Meeting.

Our Affiliates also have opportunities for new lawyers. The Association of Business Trial Lawyers (ABTL) has a Young Lawyers Division. ABTL is made up of lawyers who specialize in business litigation defense and is "dedicated to promoting a dialogue between the California bench and bar on business litigation issues." The Federal Bar Association (FBA) has a Young Lawyers Division open to attorneys under forty years of age or with ten years or fewer of practice. This is a great place for young lawyers who practice, or want to practice, in federal court to meet other attorneys who practice civil or criminal federal litigation. Other Affiliates offer reduced pricing for new lawyers to join as members. This is a great way to meet other new lawyers facing similar issues and who may have connections in the job market.

In closing, Orange County is a great place to be a law student and new lawyer! The OCBA offers programs and events specifically geared toward these groups and includes experienced attorneys who are excited to employ, mentor, and interact with the future leaders of our legal community. If you are a law student or new lawyer and are interested in any of these programs, please feel free to contact me or any of the attorneys mentioned in the article to find out more information. We welcome you and are excited to help you on your legal journey!

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Deirdre Kelly is the 2019 OCBA President. She can be reached at DeirdreKelly@ocbar.org.