



PRESIDENT'S PAGE

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The OCBA: Something for Everyone

In April, about forty OCBA members (and their guests) will head to Cuba for an excursion that will include education, adventure, and fun. The individuals attending include some of the most active and enthusiastic OCBA members, like Nikki and Joel Miliband, Dean Zipser, and Larisa Dinsmoor. Some would even call these individuals “bar junkies.”

But the OCBA is so much more than a haven for bar junkies. It offers its members so many opportunities that virtually any Orange County lawyer can take advantage of. I joined the OCBA when I was a young associate, primarily serving as a “table filler” at whatever events my firm sponsored. During many of those events I huddled in the corner talking to other young associates at my firm. Then I joined an OCBA committee.

As I had just started wading into the attorney liability practice area, the Professionalism and Ethics Committee seemed like a natural fit. It not only fostered my professional development in this practice area, but it allowed me to get to know other Orange County lawyers with similar interests—including John Hueston, Wayne Gross, Carole Buckner, Kate Corrigan, and David Stein. If this had been the full extent of my OCBA experience, I would have considered that experience to have been a success.

And that is the message I would like to get out. The OCBA is not just about trips to Cuba or joining the Board of Directors. It is about the committees, the sections, the divisions, the education, the networking opportunities, and the comradery.

The Committees. If your only interest, or time, for extracurricular work is to do something to help less fortunate individuals, you could join the Pro Bono Committee. If you want to help the community—perhaps by cleaning up the beach or organizing a food drive—then the Community Outreach Committee might be for you. Or, perhaps you want to make a difference in Sacramento by proposing changes to the laws that affect lawyers or their clients. If so, then the Legislative Resolutions Committee would be a great group to join. Or, if you want to help ensure the OCBA remains (and becomes even more of) a diverse and inclusive organization, then the Diversity and Inclusion Commission could be a great fit. In all, the OCBA has twenty-one committees, so there is something for everyone.

The Sections. If you are a trust and estate lawyer, consider joining the Trust and Estate Section, where you not only will learn relevant legal insights from experts in your field, but will meet others with similar practices. The people you meet at the monthly section meetings can become referral sources, mentors, colleagues, and even friends. The OCBA has a section for virtually every practitioner in every prac-

tice area, from business litigation to family law to criminal law. And if you end up liking what you see, consider running for a leadership position in one of these twenty-six sections.

The Divisions. The OCBA has two divisions—the Masters Division and the Young Lawyers Division—covering the spectrum of practice experiences. As appalled as I was to learn a few years ago that I now qualified as a “Master” (in practice for twenty-five years), I quickly learned how valuable—and fun—the Masters Division is. If there is a prominent lawyer in Orange County whom you have heard of, that lawyer is probably in the Masters Division. On the other end of the experience spectrum is the Young Lawyers Division, or YLD, for individuals practicing for five years or less. Join that group and you won’t have to be one of those associates attending a larger Bar event and hiding in the corner with the other young associates at your firm. You will know other young lawyers from other firms and practice areas who might become future colleagues or referral sources. And whether you are a member of the Masters Division or the YLD, you

can attend one of the most fun events of each year—Trivia Night—where we Masters get to show off our knowledge of 1980s music and movies while at the same time getting schooled about current pop culture.

Education. Both through its sections and committees, including the Education Committee, the OCBA offers so many educational opportunities, where lawyers can learn something relevant while earning MCLE credit. And they can do it while gathering with friends and colleagues. In

2019 alone, the OCBA certified 12,763 hours of education credit.

Networking. Whether you are a brand new lawyer hanging up a shingle for the first time, or a seasoned partner at a big law firm, networking never ceases to be a critical component of the profession. The more people you meet, the more opportunities you will have. The OCBA provides many chances to network with other lawyers.

Comradery. Lawyer jokes aside, the Orange County legal community boasts some of the best people around. Get to know some of them, and you just might enjoy it. Perhaps in a few years you might even want to go on that next international OCBA CLE trip and spend a few days with friends.

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