



PRESIDENT'S PAGE

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The Show Must Go On

As we all settle into what is becoming our new reality of home schooling, video meetings, and online shopping, the Orange County legal community pushes onward. For many, our workloads have slowed. With courts closing to all but the most emergent needs, civil litigators find themselves without the usual crush of deadlines. With business largely on hold, transactional lawyers are missing the rush of deal closings. And for those of us with the Bar, the ban on in-person gatherings takes away our chance to meet, network, and enjoy each other's company.

But the inability to gather has not stopped the OCBA from pushing onward and continuing to conduct its business—even if one cannot exactly call it business as usual.

The OCBA's mission statement is "[t]o enhance the system of justice, to support the lawyers who serve it, and to assist the community served by it." At no time in recent memory has it been more important for us to stick to our mission.

Enhance the System of Justice

Since the onset of this crisis, the OCBA has been in constant communication with the Orange County Superior Court leadership—in particular, Presiding Judge Kirk Nakamura. Judge Nakamura has worked tirelessly to balance myriad competing interests under the most stressful and high stakes circumstances. In the criminal courts, for example, Judge Nakamura has had to balance the constitutional rights of defendants with the health and safety concerns of court staff, lawyers, and those same defendants. In the civil arena, the court is still trying to determine not only when it can reopen for hearings and trials, but how to manage what is sure to be a significant backlog once it does reopen. As the court wrestles with these unprecedented issues, the OCBA has strived to keep its members informed of all developments, both on the OCBA website and in periodic email blasts.

Our Pro Bono Committee also has been busy working to enhance the system of justice through our close partnerships with local public service organizations, including the Public Law Center, Veterans Legal Institute, and Community Legal Aid SoCal. As these vital organizations desperately work to address the growing needs of their clients, the OCBA will work diligently with them to find them attorney volunteers.

Support the Lawyers Who Serve It

Just as our clients find themselves in uncharted waters, so do we lawyers. The OCBA takes seriously its duty to help its members in whatever ways we reasonably can. Perhaps the best way we can help is to keep our members informed. For that reason, the OCBA's COVID-19 Task Force has focused most heavily on constantly updating our website and on putting on free MCLE programs of timely interest.

Multiple times per day, the OCBA staff, working with our Task Force, updates the website to include pertinent and timely informa-

tion, including court updates, legislative developments, and insurance updates. And OCBA members have jumped to help our Task Force provide webinars on working remotely, COVID-19 employment issues, lawyer well-being, and ethics and civility in a time of crisis. As I write this, our first three webinars have had over 1,300 views! Other webinar topics include insights from in-house counsel during a pandemic and coronavirus insurance issues. And we are in the final stages of preparing an OCBA community message board to connect members who may be able to help each other.

Our member service is not all COVID-related, however. For example, our Mentor Committee continues to plan for an exciting year, even if in-person mentor/protegee meetings are temporarily off the table. They plan to partner with our Young Lawyers Division to set up virtual mentoring coffees, which will include reverse mentoring. Reverse mentoring may be more important than ever as experienced lawyers grapple with issues such as how to host a virtual meeting.

As we continue to look for ways to serve our members during these challenging times, we invite you to let us know if you have any ideas.

Assist the Community Served by It

I have always said that lawyers are among the most generous people around when it comes to giving their time to others. Our Bar is filled with lawyers who dedicate countless hours to helping pro bono clients, serving local charities, and pursuing community causes. And no pandemic is going to change that. In addition to the efforts of our Pro Bono Committee discussed above, the OCBA Community Outreach Committee is leading the charge to find ways for lawyers to help others in need. They have been in touch with restaurants who have opened their otherwise unused kitchens to produce food for homeless people and others in need, offering to volunteer in those efforts. They also are looking at ways to gather from our members and our members' contacts the much-needed personal protective equipment, or PPE, that our health care workers are in such desperate need of.

Again, if you have other ideas of ways the OCBA can help our community, please let us know.

It goes without saying that none of us has ever been through a crisis quite like this one. I am so proud of the way the OCBA leaders and staff have rallied together to continue to carry out our mission, and to make sure the business of the Bar continues. The show must go on, and, indeed it will.



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