



PRESIDENT'S PAGE

DANIEL S. ROBINSON

Our thoughts and prayers are with the people of Ukraine, especially the many families emigrating in the midst of this brutal and unjustified war. The OCBA encourages all members who want to help support nonprofits providing critical resources and relief to those in need to visit our Community Outreach page at www.ocbar.org/Get-Connected/Committees/Community-Outreach

A Wonderful Night for Joel, Judges, and the Bar

On Thursday, April 7, 2022, the OCBA held its first in-person Judges' Night in two years. It was great to see the hallways of the Irvine Marriott once again lined with smiling OCBA members, especially given the ninety-degree heat outside.

The event started with a Call to Order by 2021 OCBA President, Larisa Dinsmoor, who then led everyone in a moment of silence for all the judges and OCBA members we've lost since 2020. As Larisa provided her reflections on the last couple years, it was humbling to think about everything we've gone through during this unprecedented time.

We were privileged to have the Honorable David O. Carter officiate the event and conduct OCBA's leadership installations. Judge Carter's opening comments about how the OCBA makes an incredible difference "not only individually, but collectively" really hit home sitting in a ballroom full of OCBA colleagues for the first time in years. Judge Carter graciously performed the swearing-in ceremonies for OCBA's Charitable Fund Board of Directors, Board of Directors (including our newest directors, Casey Johnson and Brian Bayati), Executive Committee, and me, as your 2022 President. It was an honor for us all.

Personally, it was a very special evening. It was incredible to be joined by so many colleagues, friends, and family for an event that was such a long time in the making. As I mentioned that evening, on the day I first found out I had won the OCBA Secretary election, my wife went into labor with our youngest son, Clayton. He's now 3 1/2 and was there in the front row, making silly faces, along with his sister, Abby, and brother, Luke. It was a memorable night for all of us.

But there were three groups of stars that really made the evening shine.

The first was Joel Miliband and his amazing family. Joel is an incredible member of our legal community who is a truly deserving recipient of the Franklin G. West Award—OCBA's highest honor. For those who don't know Joel, he's an immensely likeable

litigator and OCBA Past President who's known for his excellence, civility, integrity, and dedication to the profession. During his acceptance speech, Joel attributed his good fortune in the law to three principle factors: (1) his mentors and colleagues, (2) his adherence to his core principles of practice, and (3) his family and friends. He thanked the many individuals in his life who contributed to his success and happiness, especially his wife and OCBA Past President, Nikki Miliband (who graciously provided a slideshow of entertaining photos of Joel). He also encouraged young lawyers to seek mentorship and urged seasoned OCBA members to take up mentoring immediately.

The second group of stars were the valued members of our Orange County state and federal judiciary. Many speakers highlighted the hard work and dedication of our judiciary who, along with their staffs, served on the front lines during COVID-19 and helped preserve due process, speedy trial, and 6th Amendment jury trial rights in Orange County. Many of the emergency protocols implemented in Orange County served as models for other counties looking to reopen. The same praise goes to other members of our Orange County legal community who worked in person on criminal and family matters during COVID-19, especially our prosecutors, criminal defense lawyers, Legal Aid attorneys, Public Defenders, and public interest lawyers. We owe them all a tremendous debt of gratitude.

The final stars were the members of the Bar itself. With nearly 600 members showing up in-person (a 2000% increase from our parking lot swearing-in ceremony in January), the event served as a clear reminder that our legal world is ready to return to in-person events, and that interpersonal relationships are an important part of our Orange County legal community. From OCBA's community partners to Affiliate Bars to the various sections and divisions, it was wonderful seeing the Bar back in force again. Although the OCBA will continue

to conduct events this year both in person and virtually, Judges' Night was an important step in the right direction for our entire legal community.

I want to give my heartfelt thanks to Judge Carter and to the OCBA staff members who helped make Judges' Night a huge success, especially Trudy Levindofsky, Carole Martinez, and Dennis Slaughter.

I hope to see everyone at the next OCBA event!

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