



PRESIDENT'S PAGE

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New Mobile-Friendly Technology for OCBA Members

Since the OCBA's inception, supporting attorney members has been one of its primary objectives. In fact, one of the three original objectives of the OCBA as stated in its 1902 Constitution was "secur[ing] the harmonious co-operation and advanc[ing] the professional interests of all its members."¹ The constitution also established a minimum fee members could charge and created a "Committee on Complaints" tasked with investigating members accused of violating the constitution. While members may now reduce their fees with impunity, the OCBA has and continues to provide vast resources to its members, including opportunities to develop connections, garner referrals, and obtain access to cutting-edge legal developments.

The OCBA also has proactively looked for new ways to make resources more readily available to members. In 2012, for example, under the leadership of OCBA President Dimetria Jackson, the OCBA developed a web-based app to allow members to access certain resources of the OCBA on their smartphones. In 2022, the OCBA formed an App Development Task Force (consisting of Dan Robinson, Christina Zabat-Fran, Josh Ji, Kelly Galligan Dunn, and me) to evaluate the development of a native app. Generally, native apps must be downloaded from a platform such as the App Store or Google Play, whereas web-based or mobile apps are automatically accessed through a web browser on your smartphone (e.g., typing ocbar.org in Safari) without having to download anything. After evaluating the pros and cons of a native app and a web-based app (which are too extensive to detail here), the Task Force, in collaboration with Dennis Slaughter (the OCBA's Director of Operations & Technology), concluded that the best course of action was to create a web-based app by redesigning the mobile version of the website as it allowed for full integration with the OCBA's database. This option would provide greater resources to members and could be customized to make it user-friendly—even for a Luddite.

A key objective of the Task Force was to ensure that members would be able to easily integrate their own calendars with the OCBA's calendar of events. The revamped mobile app provides members with the ability to view the OCBA's entire events calendar, add selected events to their calendars, and conveniently register for events using their phones. Members also have the option to filter the calendar by OCBA Section meetings, seminars, affiliate bar events, and law school events. Members also have the option to save their payment information to expedite registration for later events. There is also a "My Events" feature that provides members with a roster of all the events they have registered for. These new features will streamline the process for

members to access the OCBA's calendar and register for events.

The redesigned web-based app also includes a new directory icon that allows members to quickly access the OCBA's member directory from their smartphones. Members will be able to identify and network with others with particular subject-matter expertise, find attorneys for referrals, and increase connections with others in the legal community. The app allows members to easily contact each other by pressing a member's phone number or email address for about a second. Members also are no longer required to pay a fee to have their practice areas included in the directory. The member directory is only as useful as it is accurate and complete, so please invest a minute to ensure that your member profile is up to date and includes your practice areas.

The reconfigured web-based app also provides members with access to resources from the OCBA's twenty-six specialty sections covering a wide array of practice areas. For example, if you tap on the "Sections" icon from your phone and then tap on the link to the Business & Corporate Law Section, you will be able to quickly identify the leaders of that section and gain access to materials and handouts from each of the monthly meetings, among other valuable resources. From there, you can save, email, or print these resources as needed.

The app provides members with access to a slew of other resources including the *Orange County Lawyer* magazine, relevant news stories, and the ability to track and verify CLE compliance, among other things. The app is user-friendly and can be readily accessed by creating a shortcut on your mobile phone. The OCBA has created a one-page guide and short video to assist in using the app. These are located at <https://ocbar.org/appinfo>. Please try the app and let me know how it works for you. If you have ideas to improve the app, please email them to me at michael@ocbar.org.

ENDNOTE

(1) In case you're wondering, the other two objectives included "(2) To respect the dignity and authority of the Bench and maintain the reputation and character of the Bar" and "(3) To promote justice and protect innocence and weakness by an impartial enforcement of the law."

Michael A. Gregg is the 2023 OCBA President and a shareholder at Littler. He represents companies in all aspects of labor and employment law. He is looking forward to the USC Trojans football program winning their twelfth national championship in January 2024. You may reach him about these or other issues by emailing michael@ocbar.org

