



PRESIDENT'S PAGE

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OCBA by the Numbers and by the People Who Make Them Matter

Every time I pause to reflect on the Orange County Bar Association, I am struck by the sheer scale, energy, and professionalism of this organization, and more importantly, by the people who make it work. The OCBA is not just a membership list or a calendar of events. It is a living, evolving professional community that reflects the best of the legal profession in Orange County.

Today, the OCBA is home to 7,440 members. That number alone tells a story of reach and relevance, but the composition of our membership tells an even richer one. We count 253 current sitting judges, retired judges, and retired judges now active as attorneys among our ranks, jurists whose experience and institutional knowledge continue to shape our profession. We are also proud to include 1,749 law students, representing the next generation of Orange County lawyers who are already engaging with our bar, our courts, and our values.

The OCBA's work is carried out through a robust organizational structure that supports education, leadership, and service. We currently have 26 specialty sections and 33 committees and task forces, addressing everything from substantive areas of law to ethics, access to justice, wellness, and the future of the profession. Last year alone, the OCBA delivered 9,005 hours of certified CLE, an extraordinary testament to our commitment to high-quality, relevant continuing education.

None of this happens without volunteers. 866 members generously gave their time by serving on committees and task forces or by speaking at CLE programs. 3,775 members participated actively in our sections, and 201 leadership roles were filled over the course of the year, offering countless opportunities for lawyers to lead, collaborate, and give back.

Our programming footprint is equally impressive. In the last year, the OCBA hosted 688 events and meetings, including 128 offsite programs, 214 events at the OCBA headquarters, and 346 virtual programs. Whether in person or online, these gatherings are where ideas are exchanged, professional relationships are formed, and our collective sense of purpose is renewed.

These numbers place the OCBA in rare company. We are the third-largest metropolitan bar association in California, behind only Los Angeles County and San Diego County. Nationally, we rank among the top ten voluntary metro bar associations in the country. But while those rankings are gratifying, they matter far less than what they represent: a strong, engaged bar that chooses, voluntarily, to invest in professionalism, collegiality, and service.

That spirit has deep roots. The OCBA's history is a source of pride and perspective. *Orange County Lawyer* magazine first went to print in 1958, and photographs began appearing regularly in the 1980

issues. You may have noticed in the January issue some throwback photos from the OCBA from the 1980s. Some of us (no names) were in diapers then, while many of you were wearing shoulder pads and perming your hair. In this issue, you'll find photos from the early 1990s (think Shania Twain), and the remaining issues this year will spotlight the past quarter century of OCBA history. These glimpses into our past remind us that, while the practice of law evolves, the core values of professionalism, service, and community endure.

One of the most meaningful expressions of those values is our relationship with the judiciary. Each January, the OCBA hosts Judges' Night, a tradition that brings together approximately 700 attendees to honor and thank our Orange County judges. This annual gathering is more than a social event. It is a collective expression of respect for the individuals who dedicate their careers to public service and to the administration of justice.

In our county, we have 9 superior court locations and 142 judges and commissioners. We have our court of appeal with 6 associate justices. We have 1 immigration court, 2 federal courts, 5 district judges, 4 magistrate judges, and 3 bankruptcy court judges.

Our judges serve across a wide range of state and federal courts, handling matters that affect individuals, families, businesses, and entire communities. They do so under significant caseload pressures and resource constraints, yet with professionalism, integrity, and a deep sense of responsibility. Each year at Judges' Night, we honor them not just for the decisions they render, but for the steadiness, fairness, and commitment they bring to their roles every day. The OCBA is proud to stand in partnership with our judiciary, recognizing that a strong bar and a strong bench are mutually reinforcing.

As President of the OCBA, I am continually inspired by what we accomplish together. The statistics are impressive, but they only hint at the countless mentoring conversations, pro bono hours, educational moments, and acts of collegiality that take place throughout the year. The OCBA thrives because its members choose to engage, to teach, to lead, to volunteer, and to support one another.

Looking ahead, my hope is that we continue to build on this foundation: honoring our history, supporting our courts, investing in the next generation, and strengthening the bonds that make our legal community exceptional.



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