



OCBA ELECTION 2023 OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

PRESIDENT-ELECT

Christina M. Zabat-Fran



Christina Zabat-Fran is a high-performing, award-winning General Counsel, business and community leader with over a decade serving a global fashion industry giant. Christina is currently General Counsel and Corporate Secretary for St. John.

This year, Christina is an honoree of the Anti-Defamation League Marcus M. Kaufman Jurisprudence Award. Christina has also been recognized as General Counsel Rising Star of the Year by the Orange County Business Journal, named a "Top 40 Lawyer On The Rise" by the ABA, and shortlisted for the Global Counsel Awards and for American Lawyer's GC of the Year.

Christina has been extremely committed to public service, particularly through the OCBA. Christina currently serves as Treasurer, and prior to that served as a member of the Board of Directors, as Chair of the Corporate Counsel Section, and on several committees. Christina is Co-Chair of the OCBA Charitable Fund's "Raise Your Glass" Gala, the bar's hallmark fundraising effort. Christina also serves on the boards for the Public Law Center and the Association of Corporate Counsel and is a founding board member of the Filipino-American Lawyers of OC.

Christina believes the OCBA should be a key source for members to meet fellow talented attorneys, judges, neutrals, and for attorneys in the private sector, prospective clients, in order to best support each other during these evolving times. For example, Christina founded an annual event on behalf of the OCBA that features must-know general counsel who share their inimitable insight and mentorship with the Orange County Bar's rising young lawyers, creating a new "Circle of Counsel".

Christina is an OC native and zealously proud double ant eater – zot zot zot! As a member of the inaugural class for the UC Irvine School of Law, Christina founded several key pillars for the institution, including the student bar association, In Vino Veritas wine law club, and the law review, for which she was co-Editor-in-Chief.

Beyond her leadership in the legal and business communities, Christina loves dedicating time to the arts and cooking up delicious meals for family and friends. Don't tell her Titas, but her adobo cannot be beat! Christina believes the OCBA should provide its members with positive community-building to support balancing their practice with life's other pursuits.

TREASURER

Mei Tsang



Mei Tsang is an intellectual property partner at Umberg Zipser LLP, and honored to be endorsed by many OCBA Past Presidents and other leaders. Mei is completing two terms as an elected OCBA Board member, and has held many other leadership positions within the OCBA over the past 15 years. Among other things, she chaired the IP & Technology Section, has been a member of the OCBA Charitable Fund Board for the past eight years, including co-chairing the Raise Your Glass event, and currently is the co-chair of OCBA's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee. Mei regularly contributes articles to the OC Lawyer magazine and has developed and participated in numerous OCBA webinars. She also is a member of OCBA's Racial Justice, COVID-19, and Intergenerational Task Forces, the Mentoring, Editorial Advisory, and Lawyer Well Being Committees, and Mommy Esq. Committee.

Mei is known for her positive, can-do, attitude. She never turns down an opportunity to help and serve. In addition to her involvement with the OCBA, Mei currently is serving as the current President for Community Legal Aid of SoCal. Mei also is a proud member of Orange County Women Lawyers Association, Orange County Asian American Bar Association, Hispanic Bar Association, Thurgood Marshall Bar Association, OCKABA, Lavender Bar, and ABTL, and volunteers for the Constitutional Rights Foundation.

Our profession is facing very challenging times. All the traditional rules seem to be up in the air, ranging from how we work, who we are (in the face of State Bar changes), to our generational differences, and even to how we connect with each other. The OCBA has been tackling these challenges head on. Mei is proud to be part of those efforts and looks forward to continuing to contribute to them.

As a Chinese immigrant who came to this country at a young age, Mei had to learn how to adapt and evolve. Mei is prepared to lead the OCBA to adapt and evolve as well.

Mei thanks you for your support and wants to hear from you how the OCBA can better serve you. Please visit www.meitsang4ocba.com for more information.

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SECRETARY (Elect 1)

Shirin Forootan



Shirin Forootan is the founding and managing attorney at Forootan Law, where she practices employment litigation on both sides, provides advice and counsel, conducts workplace investigations, and provides expert testimony. She is currently on the Board of Directors for the OCBA and for Orange County Women Lawyers.

Shirin recalls her path to OCBA involvement when she was a young attorney, with a strong desire to give back. She started signing up for several community outreach volunteer events, where she very much enjoyed getting out of her home and work bubble to get to know other attorneys, law students, and judges, that she would not have otherwise had the pleasure of meeting. She eventually became Chair of the Community Outreach Committee, but that was just the beginning of her long path of volunteer service with our bar association.

Shirin went on to serve as Chair of the Mommy Esquire Committee, Chair of the Lawyer Well Being Committee, Chair of the Labor & Employment Section, and Chair of the Judiciary Committee. She has also served as an active member of the Administration of Justice Committee and Legislative Resolutions Committee. She also currently serves on the Orange County Superior Court Equal Access to Justice and Prevention of Bias Committee.

As OCBA Secretary, Shirin is ready to listen and lead. She has the leadership experience, diplomacy, and work ethic that would make an excellent leader for our bar association. She is described by others as humble and effective.

Shirin became a lawyer to help other people. As Secretary, she would tirelessly carry out the mission of our bar: "To Enhance the System of Justice, To Support the Lawyers Who Serve It, and To Assist the Community Served By It."

Shirin is native to Orange County—she grew up in Irvine and practiced at small, medium, and large firms in Orange County. She lives in Newport Beach with her husband and fourth-grade son.

Please vote for Shirin for 2023 OCBA Secretary so that she can continue her longstanding commitment to carrying out the mission of our bar. To learn more about her, please visit: www.shirin4ocbar.com.

Teresa A. McQueen



I want to be your choice for OCBA Secretary. As an active and serving member of the OCBA, I have continually demonstrated my genuine passion to serve the legal community since joining the OCBA nearly twenty years ago.

Experience: I have served multiple terms as Director at Large on the OCBA's Board of Directors (2008-2010; 2011-2013); most recently for the term 2020-2022. My leadership abilities have time and again been endorsed by colleagues as evidenced by my appointment or election over the years to serve in key leadership positions as chair or co-chair of many important OCBA divisions, committees, and sections, including the Bridging the Gap Committee (2009-Present), Charitable Fund Golf Committee (2022-Present), Education Committee (2019-Present), Membership Committee (2021-2022), Mentor on Demand Committee (2008-2011; 2016-2019), Resolutions Committee (2011), the Solo/Small Firm Section (2007), and the Young Lawyers Division (2007).

Commitment: My commitment to serve is further demonstrated by my ongoing service to the OCBA in a wide range of volunteer positions, giving me a breadth of experience in and knowledge of the OCBA. This commitment was recognized in 2018 when I was honored to receive the OCBA's Harmon G. Scoville Award for exemplifying the highest standards of the legal profession and championing our constitutional system of justice.

Leadership: I view the OCBA as a unique and important resource to serve its diverse membership. As our profession continues to evolve in this time of tremendous change, the OCBA stands ready to lead and serve. As a member of the OCBA executive committee, I commit to further develop and enhance leadership and educational opportunities for members, promote meaningful community service and pro bono opportunities, and remain, as always, responsive to membership priorities.

A former solo practitioner and small firm attorney, I am currently Corporate Counsel for Western Growers Association.

I ask for your vote so I may continue to serve our diverse membership and support the OCBA in fulfilling its mission to enhance our system of justice, support the lawyers who serve it, and assist the community served by it. Please visit www.teresamcqueen.com for more about my candidacy.

DIRECTORS – AT – LARGE (Elect 4)

Brian A. Bayati



I am honored to be a nominee to serve on the Board of Directors of the Orange County Bar Association alongside some of our most esteemed and accomplished colleagues.

My journey with the OCBA commenced over eleven years ago and continues to allow me opportunities to serve in such positions as mentor to our aspiring colleagues, member of the OCBA LRIS committee, former chair of the OCBA LRIS committee, and arbitrator for the Mandatory Fee Arbitration Panel. The chance to now serve on the Board is exciting and another opportunity for me to contribute to our organization, profession and community.

Given is the fact that there certainly is no shortage of talent amongst our colleagues who, thankfully, readily avail themselves to serve the OCBA in various capacities. My purpose in running is to contribute the vantage point of a small firm principal whose practice is limited exclusively to the County of Orange.

Our organization, community and profession as a whole face so many challenges. I aim to bring to the Board the viewpoints of the smaller sized practitioners who serve an integral role in our local community. A leadership with experience in differing areas of practice, various levels of community, and different courts within our County will provide representation reflective of our entire membership.

By way of professional background, I've been a family law litigator for the past eleven years and a principal in a boutique family law firm. For the five years preceding, I litigated civil cases within a medium-size and another boutique civil law firm. I also spent one year handling civil litigation as in-house counsel. I hope to contribute to the Board what I've learned thus far in my professional journey; and, ultimately, to our membership and community.

This election presents us, the members of the OCBA, with dedicated, capable and talented candidates to lead our organization. To be one of the nominees in this candidate pool is a privilege that I cherish. If elected, my dedication will focus on representing our members through the Board and maintaining the best interest of our organization.

Caroline R. Djang



I am honored to be nominated to run for OCBA Director at Large. Serving on the OCBA Board would allow me to fulfill two of my favorite aspects of being a lawyer: public service and making connections. I was born and raised in Orange County, and have been privileged to have been a Partner at three of Orange County's finest law firms: Rutan & Tucker, Best Best & Krieger and currently, Buchalter.

If I am elected to the Board, my main goal is for the OCBA to reach a broader, more diverse audience. Since moving back to Orange County, the OCBA and its affiliate bars have given me an opportunity to network, learn, lead and mentor. Through my service on the OCBA Judiciary Committee and the OCBA Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee, I have met members of the Orange County legal community from all different practices. As Chair of the OCBA Commercial Law & Bankruptcy Section, I have planned numerous educational programs. I also participated in mock interviews with Orange County law students.

I am dedicated to serving the legal community, actively participating in several professional organizations. I am Treasurer of the OCWLA, a member of the Ninth Circuit Conference Executive Committee, Past President of the Orange County Bankruptcy Forum, a member of OCAABA, and serve on the Justice Served Committee of CLA SoCal.

In addition to my community activities, I maintain a thriving practice as a Shareholder in Buchalter's Insolvency and Financial Law practice group. I have been honored and recognized by my peers and the media, including being named to: Southern California SuperLawyers: Top 100, Orange County Top 50, Top 50 Women Lawyers; The Best Lawyers in America®; and Banking and Finance Visionaries by the *Los Angeles Times*.

As a Board member, I would bring my passion for public service, education and access to justice to the OCBA community. I hope to make referrals within the OCBA more user-friendly, increase mentorship opportunities, and expand the OCBA's presence. I promise to always listen and put words into action. I would be honored to have your vote.

Daniel M. Glassman



I believe that service for the good of others is foundational to the legal profession. As a member of the OCBA Board of Directors, I will strive to keep this fundamental concept at the forefront. I have practiced law in Orange County for over 25 years at large firms, a boutique firm, and as in-house counsel at one of the largest local employers. Currently, I serve on the Board of the Orange County Bar Association Charitable Fund (for the last eight years) and as Co-Chair of the Mandatory Fee Arbitration Committee, where I also serve as an arbitrator hearing fee disputes. I also sit on the Board of the Constitutional Rights Foundation of Orange County, a non-partisan organization dedicated to empowering Orange County students to be active and responsible citizens through participation in law-related education programs. Previously, I served on the Boards of the Friends of the Santa Ana Zoo and United Cerebral Palsy of Orange County. I have volunteered for years at the Federal Pro Se clinic at our local District Court and have handled numerous pro bono adoptions and guardianship cases. These varied experiences will allow me to bring a unique perspective to the Board that I will use to address the many issues that affect our members.

At home, I stay busy being outnumbered by my three kids and four dogs.

I would be honored to continue my service to the OCBA, our legal community, and community at large through service on the OCBA Board. Thank you for your consideration.

Michael S. LeBoff



As a business trial lawyer in Orange County for nearly 23 years, I have benefitted greatly from the Orange County Bar Association's educational, networking and leadership opportunities. I want to continue giving back to the organization that has been so influential in my career.

As a director for the past three years, I applied the same work ethic, professionalism, and collegiality I apply to my legal work to enhance an already great organization, provide members with unparalleled educational and networking opportunities, and serve Orange County's legal community.

I previously chaired the Business Litigation Section, the largest section in the OCBA, as well as the OCBA's Banking and Lending Section. I also served three years as the co-chair of the American Bar Association's Section of Litigation's Professional Liability Litigation Committee, after serving three years as Co-Chair of Commercial and Business Litigation Committee. I also spent the past three years serving on the OCBA's Audit Committee.

After graduating from Loyola Law School, I clerked for the United States District Court for the Central District of California before joining the Orange County office of Paul Hastings LLP. From there, I took advantage of the opportunity to work at some of the finest business trial firms in Orange County. I also spent time as in-house counsel, managing litigation nationwide and working with outside counsel to develop and implement cost-effective litigation strategies. I joined Klein & Wilson in 2016 and proudly became the first new partner in the firm's nearly 25-year existence.

I am a lifelong Orange County resident, having grown up in Huntington Beach. I now live in Mission Viejo with my wife of 24 years and our two teenage daughters.

Sharon Oh-Kubisch



I am humbled and honored to be nominated for election to the Board of Directors for the Orange County Bar Association. It has been a privilege for me to be the former Secretary, Chair-Elect and Chair of the OCBA Business Litigation Section, and past Secretary and presently Chair-Elect of the OCBA Real Estate Law Section. I also currently serve on the OCBA Board of Directors for the Charitable Fund Foundation, the Administration of Justice Committee, and a Board of Director for the Orange County Asian American Bar Association (OCAABA).

A Little About Me:

I am a business and real estate litigation attorney at Smiley-Wang Ekvall, LLP. I spent over two decades practicing law in a multitude and variety of areas. For the last 23 years, I have helped clients manage their business affairs via my general counsel role, as well as business and real estate litigation, that have provided me a breadth of experience, knowledge, and perspectives, which I plan to bring to the Board for all of our benefit.

Through my leadership within the OCBA and the OCAABA Covid-19 Task Force, I gained a deep understanding of the dedication and commitment it takes to be active in this association and why the OCBA has such an impassioned community of members. I have learned how important a strong partnership with the state, district and circuit courts can be in our business. My enthusiasm, listening skills and desire to find the best solution (both-short and long- term) are a few of many reasons that make me a perfect fit for the Board.

What I Can Do For OCBA:

If elected to the Board, my goal will be to magnify the importance of the OCBA to our industry and Orange County. I also hope to bring my experience as a seasoned attorney in high conflict situations to help our community find better resolutions on the myriad of issues that face our profession. Finally, I want to continue OCBA's mantra in bringing civility and professionalism to our profession. Thank you again for this incredibly exciting opportunity and nomination.

Melissa A. Petrofsky-White



My name is Melissa Petrofsky-White and I would be honored to have your vote for Director at Large of the OCBA Board of Directors. I have served on the board for the past three years. In that time, I have served as Chair and Co-Chair of the COVID-19 Task Force, moderated and led multiple CLE presentations. In addition, I have served this community by leading and participating in the Legislative Resolutions Committee, which advocates for new laws affecting lawyers and their clients. I have also served on the OCBA State Bar Taskforce to advocate for our members with changes to the State Bar rules. I have assisted the Mentoring Committee, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, and the Community Outreach Committee. I have also previously served as Chair of the Labor and Employment Section. I welcome the chance to serve our community for another term. With the support of my husband and stepson, I would love the opportunity to serve our community for another term.

Howard M. Privette



It is such an honor to be nominated to run for the OCBA Board. Let me tell you a little bit about my background and experience, as well as my ideas for the OCBA.

I have been around the OC legal community practically all my life. I grew up in OC (Servite HS), and my dad was a deputy DA here. My dad taught me a lot about the legal profession, with a strong focus on principles of justice, integrity and civility. Nothing makes me prouder than to hear lawyers who worked with dad tell me he did it right, balancing toughness with fairness.

I have practiced for more than 30 years, focusing on business litigation with a dose of criminal defense work. I have spent a lot of that time in the state and federal courts here in OC. Today, I am proud to be a partner with Snell & Wilmer in Costa Mesa.

The OCBA has played an important role throughout my professional life. Recently, I served two terms on the OCBA Judiciary Committee, including a year as Vice Chair and two years as Chair. For several years now, I have served on the Wine Committee for the Charitable Fund's annual "Raise Your Glass" event (ok, that is more fun than work). I am also active in the ABTL and FBA, and I regularly present at bar-sponsored CLEs.

These activities illustrate some of the things that I think are integral to the mission of the OCBA. Ours can be a tough calling, but it can also be incredibly fulfilling and even a lot of fun. The OCBA provides great opportunities to meet each other, learn from each other, mentor the newer members of the bar, and serve the community around us. The OCBA also plays a key role in advocating for our profession, for our courts, and for ourselves with the legislative and executive branches of our government, and with the public at large. Above all, the OCBA is here to serve you. Let's make membership in the OCBA one of the best investments you will make.

Eric V. Traut



Eric V. Traut is a partner at Traut Firm, where he practices alongside his brother, wife, son, and niece. The focus of his practice is trial work in representing individuals and families of catastrophic injury and wrongful death. He has tried more than 100 civil jury trials, most of which were right here in Orange County. He was honored to receive Trial Lawyer of the Year awards from both OCTLA and ABOTA.

Born and raised in Fullerton, Eric began clerking for his brother, James, when he was 19. Over the last 38 years, he has developed a tremendous respect for the local legal community and judiciary. He understands the importance of the OCBA's mission and has served on its Judiciary Committee, he has been Co-Chair of the College of Trial Advocacy for more than two decades, and previously served on the Board when he was president of the Orange County Trial Lawyers Association.

During his career, Eric has demonstrated leadership and commitment to the Orange County legal community through his service as 2014 President of Project Youth OCBF (a non-profit providing education and mentoring programs for at-risk Orange County teens), past president of the Orange County Chapter of ABOTA, OCTLA, the Italian American Lawyers of Orange County, and the Banyard Inn.

He also currently serves on the Board of the Constitutional Rights Foundation and is a National Board Representative for ABOTA. For many years, he's provided mentorship to new lawyers and underprivileged high school students in Orange County through the Project Youth program, entitled Project Self.

Eric believes in an OCBA that supports diversity, civility, and remains the leader in the community for educational programs. As a Board Member, Eric will work to promote important OCBA events and educational programs, support access to justice initiatives, promote civility, diversity, and professionalism, and improve collaboration with OCBA sections and affiliate bars.

Eric obtained his law degree from Western State in 1989 after attending Cal State Fullerton. He was inducted into the Western State Hall of Fame in 2013. Eric and his wife Pamela are proud empty nesters of five adult children and are eagerly awaiting more grand babies.

For more information, visit www.erictraut.com.