



PRESIDENT'S PAGE

TODD G. FRIEDLAND

Building a More Inclusive and Stronger OCBA

Hey Todd, what's the plan for 2016?" Well, I'm glad you asked. In 2016, we will lay and build upon the foundation for a more inclusive, influential, and stronger OCBA. We will address diversity, civility guidelines, 1L Kickstart, leadership, and the Civic Center homeless.

Advisory Councils. The OCBA can, and should, increase its impact in the legal community, and in the Orange County community as a whole. One way to do that is to listen. Listen to our members. Listen to the community. Listen to the Bench. Listen to the business sector. And we also need to share the OCBA's work with these sectors.

The OCBA can convene meetings, in the form of advisory Councils, of its past presidents, judicial officers, community advocates, and business leaders to foster an intersection and expansion of ideas. Advisory councils can turn to the OCBA with matters in need of attention in their sectors. Conversely, the OCBA can turn to its advisory councils for assistance with matters important to the OCBA, its members, and the community the OCBA serves.

One of these resources is right under our nose—the prior presidents of the OCBA. Past Presidents Dick Millar, Joel Miliband, and Danni Murphy will lead efforts to create a Council of Past Presidents (CoPP). CoPP will act as a resource to the OCBA Board of Directors and the OCBA Charitable Fund. The institutional knowledge carried by these members will be invaluable in helping OCBA staff and leadership address the OCBA's needs. We will also work to explore advisory councils with the business community, judicial officers, and community-based organizations in both legal and non-legal fields.

Civility. Orange County is a wonderful place to practice law. Let's keep it that way. To do so, we must address the erosion of civility in our profession. This includes civility between bench and bar, civility between opposing counsel, and civility in our own offices. Civility will aid in preserving our reputations, and in upholding law as the noble profession it is.

We are forming the OCBA 2016 Civility Task Force to formulate civility guidelines for our members and to then explore ways to implement the guidelines. The Civility Task Force is co-chaired by Justice Richard Fybel and attorney Scott Garner. Justice Fybel has served as Chair of the California Supreme Court's Advisory Committee on the Code of Judicial Ethics, and OCBA Board member Scott Garner has served as Co-Chair of the OCBA's Professionalism & Ethics Committee. Their work will delineate a baseline of professionalism that our members can strive to surpass.

1L Kickstart. The OCBA also needs to strengthen its foundation through outreach to junior attorneys and law students. The OCBA has done a great job of mentoring junior lawyers and providing programs to aid lawyers in their first few years of practice. And, the OCBA has worked with major Orange County-based law schools to welcome their students into the OCBA fold. But we can do more.

Mentoring is a valuable resource in assisting future lawyers and

junior lawyers in finding their way. So let's get them right at the beginning and teach them about law school, what it is like to practice in Orange County, and about civility and ethics. The 1L Kickstart program will be a step in the right direction. The 2016 goal for this pilot project is to give every 1L at Orange County's ABA-accredited law schools an opportunity to get together, perhaps over lunch, with an Orange County attorney. Some of these lunches may turn into long-term mentor relationships. But, at a minimum, we will help lay a foundation for their future and the future of law practice in Orange County.

The 1L Kickstart program could require 500 volunteers. Yes, that is a lot. But we have two excellent Co-Chairs of the Task Force to help encourage your involvement. Michelle Philo is the 2016 Chair of the OCBA's 984-member Young Lawyers Division. John Sganga is a partner at Knobbe Martens and 2016 Chair of the OCBA's 1152-member Masters Division. You, too, can help. Just email heyodd@ocbar.org with the subject "Kickstart" and I will add you to the interest list.

Leadership. Junior attorneys represent the future of the OCBA. We need them to be involved, and we need to teach them to practice law the Orange County way. Fortunately, the OCBA's Leadership Committee is kicking into high gear in 2016. The Leadership Committee, chaired by OCBA Past Presidents Michael Yoder and Dean Zipser, will foster leadership opportunities and development in the OCBA, encourage committee and section involvement, and will assist the Mentoring Committee and other OCBA committees in increasing member involvement in the OCBA and in service to the community.

Civic Center Homeless. The OCBA's mission is not just about its lawyers. Instead, the OCBA's mission includes serving the community as a whole. And, we intend to do just that with a day of service to homeless people living in the shadow of the courthouse in Santa Ana.

As it turns out, in 1992 the OCBA did something similar. OCBA Past President Ed Connor, attorney Bill Grenner, and others spearheaded an effort to gather fifty attorneys to assist homeless people at the Santa Ana Civic Center with tasks such as completion of benefits paperwork and answering questions on legal issues. It is hard to believe that was 1992. You can read about the 1992 effort in *Nightmare on Civic Center Drive*, an article published in *Orange County Lawyer's* October 1992 edition, available online.

Today the tent city is sprawling and inhabited by veterans, children, and others. It is high time we get our butts back down there. The Civic Center Homeless Task Force will strive to offer a day of service at the Civic Center before the end of the third quarter of 2016. This is a monumental effort. I have asked the OCBA's Veterans, Community Outreach, and Pro Bono committees to get involved. We expect that the OCBA's Lawyers Referral & Information Service, the Public Law Center, Legal Aid Society of Orange County, and the Veterans Legal Institute will also join the effort. I am delighted that Bill Grenner also has agreed to share his wisdom from the 1992 effort. Of course, you can help too—just email heyodd@ocbar.org with the subject "Homeless" and we will add you to the interest list.

I am proud that the OCBA is a place with diverse membership, diverse opinions, and diverse outreach. I look forward to further expanding the OCBA's sphere of influence, and to Orange County's continuing to be the best place to practice law.



Todd G. Friedland, the 2016 President of the Orange County Bar Association, is a Partner with Stephens Friedland LLP. His practice focuses on complex business litigation including shareholder disputes, trade secrets, and unfair business practices. He is learning how to use Twitter. Follow him @heyoddocba.