

LACBA

LOS ANGELES COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION



From the President

As we continue to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, I welcome the opportunity to reach out to our Los Angeles County Bar Association community. Our primary concern is for the health and safety of our members and our staff, their families, and our community. While it may not be business as usual, LACBA remains a source of steadiness and continuity for our members, the legal community, and Los Angeles County at large.

In orderly fashion LACBA staff transitioned to remote work status, with near complete functionality in all areas. Feel free to contact the LACBA offices by telephone or email, and you will find our staff to be readily available to respond.

LACBA has long been a justice partner with the Los Angeles Superior Court. In this time of crisis, Presiding Judge Kevin Brazile asked LACBA to work with him in disseminating Court announcements to the many and varied Bar Associations throughout Los Angeles County. We have been privileged to ensure that the voice of the Court is transmitted to our members and to the many Affiliate Bars, Affinity Bars, and other Bar Groups throughout the County who we consider to be our community partners. If any Bar Group has not received our announcements, I invite them to contact me to be placed on our distribution list.

Our Sections and Committees have quickly adapted to using remote technology to meet, plan and present programs and events. Several are ready to launch. Our Section Listserves are increasingly active. Section Chairs are also encouraged to use Section email lists to communicate. New ideas for creative meetings and events are forthcoming daily. The energy and enthusiasm which has permeated LACBA this year has not waned. All of us are learning to use new technologies in our work life and in our Bar life as well. While this may be a challenging time, it is also an exciting time to experiment and learn.

Likewise, our pro bono projects operating through the Counsel for Justice continue to provide services to those in our community who need our assistance. While our government restrictions have limited the manner in which we provide these services, we are adapting and continuing onward to serve the needs of those in our community who need help from our projects.

As many of us struggle to work from home and fear the economic consequences of the health crisis, patience understandably runs thin. We recently published a statement from our highly valued Professional Responsibility and Ethics Committee (PREC) reminding lawyers of the Guidelines for Civility in Litigation, and urging professional courtesy in granting reasonable extensions and continuances after consulting with clients when it may be required. LACBA's Litigation Section added the suggestion of using e-service by rule change, if not by agreement. While we are advocates for our clients, we owe it to our profession, our clients and ourselves to recognize that courtesy, cooperation and kindness are not signs of weakness; rather they are essential practices in this time of crisis and beyond.

While the legal profession is clearly not in business as usual mode, we have found a way to conduct usual business in new and different ways. The same is true at LACBA. I remain in contact with our Executive Director and senior staff multiple times each day. We have and will continue to insure that LACBA's daily operations continue unabated.

Wednesday night was an historic event for us - the first meeting of the LACBA Board of Trustees using Zoom technology. Trustees and staff attended and participated. Guests were welcomed and presented in our virtual Boardroom. All of our business was completed, and in the process we selected the recipients of LACBA's prestigious Shattuck-Price Outstanding Lawyer Award, Outstanding Jurist Award, and Diversity Impact Award for presentation at our next Installation. Amidst the drama of the Coronavirus, we still celebrate those who deserve our recognition and praise.

Be assured that we are on the job for you every day. LACBA remains a vibrant organization of lawyers, by lawyers and for lawyers despite COVID-19. Take comfort that we continue to work closely with the Courts and our fellow Bars throughout our Los Angeles County to meet your needs. If you have questions or suggestions our staff will be happy to hear from you. If you prefer, you are welcome to email me directly at President@LACBA.org.

We will see this health crisis through, and we will come out the other side. This situation will not defeat us, and we will learn and be stronger as a result.

Take good care, be well and stay safe.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'RFB', written in a cursive style.

Ronald F. Brot
President