



CAALA President

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A sense of normalcy but no time for complacency

THE LA LEGAL COMMUNITY LOOKS VERY DIFFERENT TODAY THAN IT DID JUST A COUPLE SHORT MONTHS AGO

Spring is in full bloom here in Southern California. Springtime is the perfect metaphor for our emergence from the long winter of a two-year pandemic that has impacted every aspect of our lives. We have truly been in an unprecedented time for the courts, the practice of law, and society as a whole.

Through it all, CAALA has been and continues to be the indispensable partner in your plaintiff's practice. When the pandemic first hit, CAALA pivoted to meet your virtual needs and be an essential resource for everything happening in the Los Angeles legal community. We moved the CAALA "community" to a virtual platform and continued offering the outstanding programming and resources you have come to expect. And CAALA's staff did it seamlessly. For much of the isolation of the pandemic, CAALA was the way to continue to interact with our colleagues – whether on the Listserv, in virtual programming, or during Zoom meetings and events.

While virtual interactions are likely here to stay in some form, since I wrote last month's column much has changed. Los Angeles lifted its indoor mask mandate – just in time for CAALA's annual Gala where I, along with CAALA's Officers and Board of Governors, were finally installed to our 2022 positions. The Gala had some 1,200 people in attendance, including close to 50 sitting judges. It was a remarkable evening for CAALA. There was a true sense of excitement in the air for the first big social event of the Los Angeles legal community post-pandemic. I was personally overjoyed to see and interact with long-time and new friends. I lost all sense of time during the pandemic and still can't grasp that it had been two years since I had seen many of the people at

the Gala. For some that I got to know during the pandemic, it was the first time that I had met them in person. For many of us, it was the most "normal" we had felt in a very long time.

CAALA staff hires

The Gala was a tipping point in our emergence from the pandemic and CAALA is going to ride that wave to continue to provide the very best programming and resources you have come to expect. To meet your needs, CAALA has strengthened its staff with two key hires, Nyleen Viegas as Affiliate & Sponsorship Manager, and Fatima Jones as Education & Events Manager. While there is a renewed sense of normalcy, there is no time for complacency. We must be ever vigilant, as we saw when Philadelphia reinstated its indoor mask mandate due to rising Covid rates.

The Los Angeles legal community looks very different today than it did just a couple short months ago. Trials are now going out in higher numbers than even pre-pandemic. We have resumed numerous CAALA education programs and other events with a host of offerings in person and virtually. Just in the month of April CAALA put on a Med-Mal Roundtable, Women in Law Chat & Chew, Legal Staff Status of the Court Post-Pandemic, Coping with Trauma, DEI Career Panel, Protecting Your Injured/Disabled Client's Employment Rights, and the Jury Selection Workshop.

Planned events

While we enjoy all these present offerings, the months to come will continue this robust programming – ranging from educational to in-person networking and mixers. CAALA is hard at work planning numerous upcoming events, including a Cadaver Program:

Anatomy of the Cervical Spine, an e-discovery program, a Litigation Lab on DMEs, and the Women Trial Skills Conference. Although not until Labor Day Weekend, CAALA is spending much of its time behind the scenes gearing up for CAALA Vegas. This year will be CAALA's 40th in Vegas, its Ruby Anniversary and will be our most special yet with the most timely programming from the best attorney and judge speakers.

Against this current backdrop, CAALA's Strategic Plan Task Force is in full stride to ensure that we are meeting our members' needs top down and bottom up. We are asking critical questions like: What do our members need now that they didn't before? How can we help our members work less stressfully, more profitably and more productively? What is CAALA uniquely positioned to do for its members? That work will continue not just to guide CAALA during my presidency, but also for years to come. We simply cannot lead CAALA on an annual basis, we must have a strategic plan – and all of the great programming and initiatives that flow from that strategic vision – to chart our course into the future. We formed the Strategic Plan Task Force with a singular purpose in mind – to be the essential resource and partner in your plaintiff's practice now, and for years to come. While we can enjoy a moment of normalcy, we have no time for complacency.

I am honored to advance our causes on your behalf and to be your 2022 president. As always, I invite you to contact me at any time (dsilverstein@californialaborlawattorney.com) with questions or ideas on how CAALA can better serve you.

