

ASSOCIATION OF BUSINESS TRIAL LAWYERS

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REPORT

LOS ANGELES

SPRING 2021

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Susan Leader

As we close the chapter on 2020, I am honored to step into the very big shoes left by Valerie Goo, the longest serving President in ABTL history, and serve as your new President. While there is still uncertainty as we navigate how and when to return to in-person programming safely, I'm confident that with the leadership and support of my fellow Executive Board members—Manuel

Cachán (Vice President), Kevin Boyle (Treasurer), and Michael Mallow (Secretary)—and Executive Director Linda Sampson, we will continue to steer the ABTL to new heights.

While we await the return of in-person programming, Robert Wallan kicked off our virtual programming efforts on March 23 with an insightful discussion with our board members Judge Gutierrez, Justice Segal, Judge Taylor, and Judge Wardlaw on the state and future of the courts in COVID. Next month, Andre Cronthall and board member Judge Brazile will host our first ever state-wide webinar featuring a discussion with our newest Supreme Court Justice Jenkins. And not to be outdone, our Young Lawyers Division will be hosting an online discussion this month between board member Suzelle Smith and Senator Doug Jones regarding lessons learned in his illustrious career that is sure to be a draw for our young lawyer members.

Notwithstanding COVID, I'm happy to report that our membership continues to grow and diversify. We now have a record number of members from westside firms on both the plaintiff

and defense sides of the bar. Our work as an organization reflects our ongoing commitment to promoting thoughtful discourse between the bar and the bench. Our civility committee, led by Amy Lucas and Dan Warshaw and comprised of almost two dozen board member judges and attorneys, continues to meet regularly and explore how to transform civility in our practice from an aspirational objective to a requirement. A special thank you to our former board member Justice Brian Currey for his commitment and work on this important committee.

As much as we've been able to accomplish virtually, I miss seeing and connecting in-person with each of you at our ABTL cocktail receptions and dinners. As I've been navigating a year of virtual work and school with my children, I rely even more on my Zoom time with my colleagues and friends in the ABTL community to stay connected. I'm happy to report that planning for the annual seminar in-person and in Hawaii is well under way, as well as initial planning for in-person programming in the second half of this year. I look forward to seeing everyone soon and celebrating what we've been able to accomplish both personally and professionally in the face of these unimaginable challenges.

In the meantime, stay well and see you soon.

Susan Leader

ABTL President, 2021