



Vol. 2019, No. 5 November 2019

President's Message

By: Yolanda V. Torres, HBA President



Dear members and friends of the Orange County Hispanic Bar Association,

It's hard to believe the end of the year is already here. As we reflect on the year, we are thankful for your continued support. It has been a successful year for the OCHBA as many of our members and supporters continued to give back to our community in many ways.

Together, we celebrated our 41st Anniversary and Scholarship Fundraising & Installation Dinner where we donated \$25,000.00 in scholarships to deserving law students. In May, we traveled to the beautiful jungles of Costa Rica for our sold out annual CLE trip. We held another successful sold-out End of the Summer Mixer, honored Nate Scott as our Judge of the Year, continued to support the Orange County Justice Fund and the Elizabeth G. Macias Legal Studies Academy in addition to many other great community contributions by our members.

We continue to be inspired by our members and Past-President's who continue to give back to the community. On October 24th, the Orange County Justice Fund held their 2nd Annual Celebration and Fundraiser. Sponsors included the Hispanic Bar Association of Orange County, and the Hispanic National Bar Association. The board of the OC Justice Fund includes Past OCHBA Presidents Lisa D. Ramirez, Norma García Guillén, Eric Dominguez, and current OCHBA board member Sabrina Rivera. In 2019, OCJF created the first and only immigrant bond fund in Orange County, which has so far helped secure the release of 22 ICE detainees. Those released include OC residents, asylum seekers, and members of vulnerable populations including survivors of domestic violence, DACA recipients, and people with disabilities. For more information about this amazing organization, please visit <https://ocjusticefund.org/>.

Also, please see a recent article about the OCJF, <https://laopinion.com/2019/11/01/el-fondo-de-justicia-del-condado-de-orange-libera-a-21-indocumentados/>.

Many members of the HBA board attended a mentoring event at Trinity Law School where they continue to inspire young law students. Thank you, Rose Amezcua-Moll, Shelly Aronson, Stephanie Franco, Brian Ducker, and President-Elect Bettina Yanez!



Current OCHBA Board Member and OC Public Defender, Michael Mooney, continued to lead the way by coaching students at the Santa Ana High School- Elizabeth G. Macias Legal Studies Academy, where they just finished their mock trial season. This was the third year of Santa Ana High School fielding a mock trial team and they showed a great amount of improvement. The students won their first head to head match this year, beating Loara High School. The kids have shown growth every year and were able to get a victory! Thank you to the OC Hispanic Bar Association for supporting the Santa Ana High School mock trial team and Legal Studies Academy program. The kids work very hard and are excited to keep getting better. The OCHBA looks forward to supporting the kids next year and hopes to see some of these kids join the OCHBA in the future!



Last month, several directors attended the LLBA/CLJA Judges event hosted by the Honorable Elizabeth Macias.



Congratulations to OCHBA Board Member Steffi Gascon Hafen for being recognized as a 2019 Lawyer on the Rise by the American Bar Association. We are proud of you Steffi and thankful for your service on the OCHBA Board! For more on Steffi, please see, https://www.americanbar.org/groups/young_lawyers/projects/on-the-rise/2019-honorees/steffi-gascon-hafen/

Additional congratulations to long-time HBA Supporter the Honorable Franz Miller who joined JAMS earlier this year! For More information on Judge Miller, please see <https://www.jamsadr.com/franz-miller/>.

We are also very proud of Past President Lyo Figueroa who opened his own law firm earlier this year where he continues to serve the community with his immigration and personal injury practice! We are proud of you Lyo! <https://www.thefigueroafirm.com/>

As we continue to be thankful for all that was accomplished this year, we encourage you to donate to the Orange County Community Foundation Fund, which manages the Hispanic Bar Association's Wally Davis Scholarship Fund so that you may qualify for 501 (c) 3 charitable contribution tax benefits. Please contact Michelle Abril with the Orange County Community Foundation (Fund Administrator) at (949) 553-4202 ext. 246 or Mabril@oc-cf.org.

We hope to see you all at our Annual Holiday Mixer on December 5th at The Hacienda where we will announce our election results. Please bring an unwrapped toy to benefit TKO Boxing Club (Monetary contributions or gift cards will also be accepted in lieu of a toy). Please see link for the toy wish list <https://ochba.org/resources/Documents/2019%20Christmas%20Wish%20List.pdf>.

A special thank you to the sponsors of our Annual Holiday Mixer



I would also like to thank our amazing HBA board this year for their continued support and generosity. I am thankful for and inspired by all of your hours spent with me volunteering to serve our community. I am also thankful for the leadership and kind words received from fellow board members, member's at large, judicial officers and past presidents. The continued success of the HBA is a result of your support.

The HBA will be in good hands next year with incoming President Bettina Yanez. With the upcoming 42nd Annual Installation and Scholarship Dinner on March 7, 2020, and CLE Trip to Nueva Vallarta, I am certain Bettina will make next year another exciting and successful year for the OCHBA!



Please do not forget to send us your announcements on the amazing work you continue to do!

Stay tuned for an upcoming announcement regarding our new board members for 2020.

Wishing everyone the happiest of holidays!

We look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events, please remember to [renew your membership today!](#)

Warm Regards,

Yolanda Victoria Torres
2019 OCHBA President