

Barristers Set Annual Bench-Meets-Bar Reception

IT IS ALMOST THAT TIME AGAIN. On January 18, 2018, the Barristers Section of the Los Angeles County Bar Association will host its annual bench-meets-bar reception for our local, state, and federal judiciary at the Jonathan Club in downtown Los Angeles. As in years past, this will be a remarkable opportunity for young Southern California attorneys to mingle with judges and develop long-lasting relationships with them. Young attorneys sometimes think that judges are inaccessible or intimidating to approach, but that is not the case at this event. The judges do not show up wearing their robes or carrying their gavels. This is why we encourage everyone to attend. This is the time and place to speak with and get to know the judges on a personal level—something you cannot do inside the courtroom.

This event is not only set up to help lawyers. It is also an opportunity for the Barristers to express gratitude to our judges. Giving back to our judiciary is in fact one of our top priorities and has always been near and dear to our hearts at the Barristers. After all, some of LACBA's most notable past presidents include the esteemed and very accomplished Honorable Lee Edmon and Honorable Margaret M. Morrow. As Justice Edmon (presiding justice in Division Three, Court of Appeal for the Second Appellate District) graciously expressed it when previously requested to describe her own Barristers experience:

Participating in the Barristers Section gave me the opportunity to meet and work with many lawyers whom I probably would not have met otherwise. Through the Barristers Section, I developed a network of colleagues who have provided support throughout my entire career. Perhaps most importantly, many of those people became lifelong friends.

Justice Edmon captures the essence of what it means to be part of this organization. This event in particular highlights our goal of bringing together not only lawyers but also judges and lawyers.

It is no secret that there are many pressing issues facing our judicial system at this time. From trying to operate under the constraint of budget cuts to striving to provide equal access to justice for members of our community, our hardworking judges in courtrooms throughout Los Angeles have a lot to deal with on a daily basis. That is why we take pride in hosting this event for them. We do it to thank them for their service and to show our sincere appreciation for everything they do to make our justice system work. I know I do not speak alone when I say if there is anything we as attorneys can do to help make their jobs easier, we stand ready, willing, and able. We are truly at their service.

At our last reception, more than 150 guests attended, including

over 35 judges. This year we are expecting even more. We will also have the privilege this year of hearing from Los Angeles County Superior Court Presiding Judge Daniel Buckley and Central District Chief Judge Virginia Phillips. Judge Buckley was appointed to the Los Angeles bench in 2002 by Governor Gray Davis. Before being appointed presiding judge, he became the supervising judge of the civil courts in 2012 after serving as the assistant supervising judge. Prior to appointment to the bench, Judge Buckley spent 22 years in private practice where he represented defendants in tort and environmental litigation. He went

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to undergraduate school and law school at the University of Notre Dame. Judge Phillips attended the University of California at Riverside and obtained her law degree from Berkeley. She was in private practice for about 10 years before serving as court commissioner for Riverside Superior Court. After that, Judge Phillips served as federal magistrate judge and was appointed by President Bill Clinton in 1999 as federal judge for the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California. During her tenure as federal court judge, she has presided over many high-profile cases, including the “don’t ask, don’t tell” case that received national acclaim in 2010.

That Judges Buckley and Phillips have agreed not only to attend our reception but also to deliver their remarks speaks to their commitment to our young legal community. They are devoted to our advancement in this profession and recognize the importance of assuring that we know what we can do to make ourselves better lawyers. We look forward to hearing them discuss these themes as well as touch on other important topics, including the current status of their respective courts and how young lawyers can be more engaged with the courts.

The reception starts at 6:30 p.m. and admission is free. Registration is required and will be offered online at www.lacba.org or by phone at (213) 627-2727. I am also happy to answer any questions you may have. E-mail me directly at glassman@psblaw.com or by phone at (310) 477-1700. ■

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