



OCTLA President
Jonathan Dwork
ORANGE COUNTY TRIAL LAWYERS ASSOCIATION



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A strong community

TOGETHER WE CELEBRATE OUR VICTORIES

Let me first congratulate 2019 CAOC President Mike Arias for his year of leadership. And, good luck to incoming President Micha Star Liberty. CAOC will have the continued support of the Orange County Trial Lawyers Association (OCTLA).

Being a trial lawyer is a constantly changing and ever-challenging experience. Having practiced consumer protection law exclusively for over 13 years, I can also say this profession is one of the most gratifying. We consumer attorneys work diligently, risking our own resources and time in hopes of helping others. I am certain that this challenging profession would be even more difficult without the tremendous support consumer attorneys show one another. We celebrate our victories as a group, and we collectively mourn the losses. Behind every win, or loss, or challenge, is a sea of support offered by other consumer attorneys.

It is this strong community instilled by the various trial lawyer and consumer organizations throughout the state that makes me feel particularly humble and honored to be installed as the 2020 OCTLA President.

Whenever I consider what an amazing and powerful organization that OCTLA is recognized as, I have to acknowledge the past presidents that have served the organization. As I am told by past leaders of OCTLA, this organization has grown over the years from a small and informal support system, to a systematic and ever-present fraternity of consumer trial lawyers. This is attributable to the

past leadership and fearless efforts to continually grow the organization in size and sense of community. For that, I say thank you to all the past OCTLA presidents. This includes immediate past president B. James Pantone, who is coming off a wonderful year as our organization's leader. Under Jim's leadership, the organization has now surpassed over \$1M in charitable contributions to various local charity groups. In this past year alone OCTLA raised over \$140,000 for The Center for Autism. Congratulations on a great year, Jim.

In addition to the past presidents, I must acknowledge another reason OCTLA is a strong and thriving organization: Executive Director Janet Thornton. Every year a new OCTLA president comes and goes. But there is never a loss of continuity because of Janet. Janet is behind every event, every committee, all of the charity fund raisers, and the continual efforts to keep our community informed and educated. She is the institutional memory of our organization. Janet is the reason OCTLA has become what it is. She is the most hardworking and driven Executive Director any incoming president could ever hope for. OCTLA is particularly honored this year to celebrate Janet's 20-year anniversary. In those 20 years I am not sure anybody has pushed the consumer trial lawyer community as hard as she. I speak on behalf of OCTLA when I say, we love you, Janet! Thank you for everything!

OCTLA's 2020 efforts will officially take off at the Installation of Officers and Directors on January 18, 2020, at the Balboa Bay Club in Newport Beach. In addition to the swearing in of our incoming board members and officers, Hon. Nathan Scott will be honored as OCTLA's Trial Judge of the Year.

While I am excited to be sworn in to my final leadership position at the OCTLA Installation event, I acknowledge that many challenges lie ahead as we approach this voting season. Between the continued underfunding of California courts and the constant tort reform efforts to undermine consumer rights, OCTLA intends to be vigilant in its efforts to help protect access to the civil justice system. We move forward with our mission, including keeping the members of our community educated, and in providing access to collective resources, knowledge, and experience.

We hope to see many of you at our January 18, 2020 Installation program, where we will celebrate the success of the past year and recommit to our mission for the year ahead.

Jonathan Dwork is a member of the American Board of Trial Advocates, currently an executive board member of the Orange County Trial Lawyer's Association, and an executive board member of the Banyard Inn of Court. In these roles, Mr. Dwork has delivered multiple lectures and presentations for various legal organizations. 📍