



Now more than ever, OCTLA will “Take No Challenge Alone”

THROUGH THIS DIFFICULT TIME, WE CONTINUE TO HELP AND SUPPORT EACH OTHER

I could have never expected that my year as President of the Orange County Trial Lawyer Association (OCTLA) would transpire into what it has become today. I have felt worried. I have felt sad. I have felt hurt. I feel like I have constantly been telling our members that we will not be enjoying the many events we have grown so accustomed to. I have worked with various groups, I have conferred with the Orange County judicial leaders, I have collaborated alongside our Board of Directors in deciding what is going to happen. Unfortunately, the result is always the same. Events are canceled. Meetings are postponed. Schedules are changed.

The reality we now face at OCTLA is that the fun times we would have had, and lifetime memories we would have created, will not come to fruition in the way we expected. Unfortunately, CAOC Justice Day was canceled. I am sorry to report, that the CAOIE/OCTLA Palm Springs Seminar was taken off calendar. The OCTLA CLE in-person events for March, April, and May are, at best, postponed. Future programs are being assessed on a day-by day basis. We will surely keep you all apprised of any new developments.

While my immediate reaction was worry, sadness, and hurt, I have been feeling something much different over the last several days...I have felt incredibly PROUD.

I am proud of our OCTLA members. Through this difficult time, we continue to help and support each other. The OCTLA list serve is more active now than anytime I can remember in the past. With the many challenges that we face as business owners, practitioners, and advocates, we have continued to share ideas and offer guidance to one another. We have all contributed in sharing information as quickly as it has been released. Our members collaborate on the

constant hurdles that present themselves. Although we cannot do this in person, or face to face, the support has not stopped. Our backing for one another is stronger than ever. Thank you to our OCTLA members. I am so proud of all of you.

I am proud of our Orange County judicial leadership. Orange County Presiding Judge Kirk Nakamura and Presiding Civil Judge James DiCesare have done an exceptional job this year keeping our community informed and working through these difficult challenges. They have made themselves available with updates and open discussion, even when I know it has been a tremendous strain on their schedule. I cannot say enough to emphasize how incredible a job they are doing in working with the legal community in navigating these uncharted waters. I am very proud of the Courthouse that OCTLA calls home.

I am proud of the OCTLA Board of Directors. With all that has been going on in the world, each one of them has remained dedicated to serving this organization. This Board of Directors has continued to volunteer their time even with the incredible challenges they are each facing as individuals. No board member has ever complained. They have remained with OCTLA, and they

have been by my side in making tough decisions and facing uncomfortable calls. I am unbelievably proud of the OCTLA Board of Directors.

I am proud of OCTLA Executive Director Janet Thornton. She has remained steadfast in her commitment to this organization and her rock-solid work ethic. I am proud of what she continues to do for this organization, and I am proud of how much she believes in pushing forward regardless of the obstacles that we are facing. OCTLA is proud of the amazing Executive Director we have with our organization.

Last, I am proud of the OCTLA organization as a whole. I now know that we can face anything as an organization. It does not matter whether the challenge is COVID-19, or some other unforeseen adversity, this organization is here to stay. We are strong. We are solid. We are not going anywhere. I am so incredibly proud to say that even in these hard times, with all that is going on, our mantra is louder than ever...TAKE NO CHALLENGE ALONE!

I hope that things will change very soon. Until then, I wish you and your families safety and health.

