



CAALA President

Douglas Silverstein

KESLUK, SILVERSTEIN, JACOB & MORRISON, P.C.

Welcome to the magic of CAALA Vegas

THE ANNUAL CONVENTION BEGAN 40 YEARS AGO AND WE'VE BEEN COMING TO LAS VEGAS EVER SINCE

Labor Day weekend typically involves end-of-summer celebrations with barbecues, going to the beach or just relaxing. CAALA members look forward to something else – spending the weekend in Las Vegas with well over 3,000 of their colleagues, associates and friends. That can only be one thing – CAALA Vegas.

CAALA Vegas is my favorite legal event of the year, and I am attending this year for the 19th time. I have been to other local, state and national conventions. Nothing compares to CAALA Vegas, from its size as the largest trial lawyer convention, to the amazing opportunities throughout the weekend. The combination of cutting-edge education sessions, incredibly useful written materials, fantastic socializing at parties and the networking are unrivaled. Where else can you spend the weekend chatting in a relaxed setting with your colleagues, defense counsel and judges? The convention presents a truly unique opportunity to establish relationships that can last for years. The relationships I have made at CAALA Vegas have no doubt made me a better lawyer.

I am especially proud to serve as CAALA President for CAALA Vegas' Ruby Anniversary – our 40th in Vegas. While CAALA started in 1949 (then known as the Lawyers Roundtable), CAALA Vegas started in 1983. It wasn't quite a convention then, just a seminar. At the time, no one was sure there would be a second Las Vegas Seminar, let alone 39 more. But it became an institution, and CAALA members have been coming to Las Vegas ever since.

The numbers that first year were quite a bit different than today. Attendance was about 300, there were 31 speakers and eight exhibitors. Fast forward to 2022 and this year's CAALA Vegas will have over 3,000 attendees, and hundreds of speakers and exhibitors. One of the most exciting changes since

CAALA Vegas started is our commitment to diversity and inclusion. Back in 1983, there was only one woman speaking at the seminar. This year, I'm proud to tell you that there are *66 female speakers*. Our presenters are very diverse and many are speaking for the first time. That says a lot about our future.

CAALA's incredible staff has worked so hard to make sure we truly have a best-in-class convention, with electronic registration from sign-up to badge printing; an incredibly useful CAALA Vegas website and mobile app that puts the entire event in the palm of your hand.

We also have an entire track and sessions devoted exclusively to our member firms' legal staff. This is truly one of the most exciting developments in CAALA over the past decade. We all know what CAALA means to its attorney members. We created the Legal Staff Support Group to provide legal staff the same opportunity to learn and connect. The more than 500 legal staff members is a testament to how vital this group is. I was privileged to conceive of and found the Legal Staff Support Group. I never could have imagined that what started as quarterly meetings in downtown Los Angeles would evolve into an entire legal staff track at our convention. While I chaired the Legal Staff Support Group for the first year, I couldn't be prouder that it is now chaired and run by legal staff members: By legal staff, for legal staff.

I want to thank Education Chairs Christina Coleman, Shannon Ward, Belinda Theam and Stuart Fraenkel, Convention Co-Chairs Bruce Brusavich, Alyssa Schabloski, Oscar Rene Gutierrez, Derek Tran, Allison Schulman, Ji-In Houck, Danny Abir, Megan Klein, Ese Omofoma, and Belinda Theam. You will see many of them moderating the sessions in Vegas. When you attend one of the sessions this year, walk up to the front of the room and thank them for putting together such a great convention.

Don't miss the Annual Member Lunch Meeting

I would like to personally invite each of you to join me at CAALA's Annual Member Meeting on Friday, September 2, 2022, 12:30-1:45pm in the Bellagio Ballroom. Among those speaking will be Los Angeles Superior Court Presiding Judge Eric Taylor, AAJ President-Elect Tad Thomas, CAOC President Craig Peters, CAOC CEO Nancy Drabble, and special guest U.S. Senator Alex Padilla. That each of these local, state and national leaders will be at our convention speaks volumes about the importance of CAALA. Lunch will be served and you will have the opportunity to hear updates on issues critical to our practices, including on the courts, our legislative activity, the importance of the upcoming elections, and our efforts to prevent the State Bar from allowing non-attorneys to own law firms and practice law.

We all know about the cutting-edge legal education programs taught by some of the most outstanding trial attorneys in the entire country, the Thursday Welcome Party, the Friday CAALA Member Luncheon Meeting, the Saturday Cocktail Party, and the Sunday Poolside Brunch. But as great as the program is, CAALA Vegas is special for another reason – the ability to connect with so many people.

Whether this is your first or 40th CAALA Vegas, I hope you connect with as many CAALA Vegas attendees as you can, but I also want to give you a personal invitation to start – to connect with me. My year as CAALA President has been filled with a lot of highlights, but none is more gratifying to me than the many conversations I have had with CAALA members. CAALA Vegas is the perfect time for all of us to continue those conversations. After all, that is the magic of CAALA Vegas. 