



OCTLA President

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The Year of the Rabbit

A LOOK AT THE SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM AND AN INFORMATIVE SEMINAR ON HOW TO MAKE YOUR FOCUS GROUP SMARTER AND MORE COST EFFECTIVE

Just as the Year of the Rabbit should be, 2023 is off to a fast start. The board members of the Orange County Trial Lawyers Association are hard at work planning out the 2023 year of events and seminars. On January 21, 2023, the Board was sworn in and I officially accepted the gavel as President of OCTLA. Exactly one week later the board held our annual strategic planning meeting at Paradise Point Resort in Mission Bay, San Diego. I wish I could tell you all about the installation and the meeting, but this article was due before January 21st, so I am hoping that what I wrote above accurately reflects the end of January! Stay tuned next month for all the exciting announcements I hope to have!

I am new to writing a monthly article for the Advocate and it is quite the adjustment planning out a topic one month in advance. In our fast-paced society, it's easy to fall into the trap of immediate information overload. So, as I sit here and think about the coming month, I am trying desperately to slow down and take it all in. I have waited to be president for many years and now that it's finally here, I am torn between slowly inhaling every moment and rushing to get onto the next meeting to ensure a productive and event-filled year. The work of the president is never done!

What I can report is that OCTLA's Summer Internship Program is in full swing. The internship program began in 2018 following the San Francisco Trial Lawyer Association's model. I want to thank SFTLA for graciously assisting OCTLA with launching our internship program. TLAs helping each other at every turn is a great example of the camaraderie that trial lawyers share. Since 2018, three Orange County law firms have hosted a rotation of three law school interns from local Orange County law schools over the summer.



What makes the OCTLA internship so meaningful is that the interns are not just assigned to a cubicle to research legal topics. Our interns shadow the participating lawyers in deposition, court, and trial. The experience is a hands-on internship that provides the law students with practical real-world legal experience. We are excited to continue the program this summer with our participating law firms: Andal Law Group (providing personal-injury practice area perspective), Bentley More (providing workers compensation and personal-injury practice areas), and the Law Offices of Jennifer Johnson (providing medical-malpractice experience.) The mentorship committee will interview law student candidates in early February, and we should be announcing the chosen interns in the coming months.

Also on the horizon in February, is our monthly dinner and education seminar on February 23, 2023. This month's seminar is in person at the Tustin Ranch Golf Club. The topic is how to make our focus groups smarter, and the presenters are Gavin Long of Bisnar|Chase and jury consultant Harry Plotkin. Have you ever thought about utilizing a focus group for a case before mediation or before it goes to trial? Are you wondering how to cost-effectively undergo this process? Plotkin and Long will walk you through everything you need to know on how to get started and what to watch out for when utilizing a

focus group. It is a must-attend seminar!

As you can tell, I am excited for the upcoming year as OCTLA builds upon the progress achieved last year as we returned to some pre-pandemic traditions, while remaining mindful of maintaining the health and safety of our members. Next month, I will report on all of the great plans discussed at our strategic planning meeting. Be sure to check out OCTLA's Instagram @octla_org and OCTLA's Facebook page. Stay tuned!

Lindsey Aitken is the Managing Partner at the law firm Aitken Campbell Heikaus Weaver, specializing in employment law. ACHW represents employees in all aspects of employment law, including wrongful termination, discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and unfair competition, including claims under both federal and California laws, such as the Family and Medical Leave Act, the California Family Rights Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, the California Fair Employment and Housing Act, the Equal Pay Act, California's Trade Secret Act, and other labor and employment laws.

Lindsey is currently serving as President of the Orange County Trial Lawyers Association and served as President of the Celtic Bar Association from 2015-2017. She is a member of American Association for Justice, Consumer Attorneys of California, and the Orange County Bar Association.

