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A million reasons to join the trial lawyer charities

HERE ARE JUST A FEW FROM OUR MEMBERS

If you walk into a room (or onto a convention floor) filled with attorneys and ask each one why he or she became a plaintiff lawyer, you will hear hundreds of different reasons.

It is the same with *why* people become involved – and stay involved – with Los Angeles or Orange County Trial Lawyers' Charities. The personal reasons may vary, but the underlying desire to make a difference in our communities is always there.

"I've never been a very political or corporate person. When I listened to Bruce Traney and heard why he started Los Angeles Trial Lawyers' Charities in 2006, I said to myself, I can get my hands around this and do something good for our profession and for people in our community," said Gerald L. Marcus, past president of LATLC. "It's a selfless organization that truly focuses on others in need rather than political issues."

Jonathan Dwork said, "I became involved [with OCTLC] when I was the president of the Orange County Trial Lawyers Association (OCTLA). I have stayed involved because we have a wonderful board, a great president, and an awesome mission to help our OC community!"

For many, the idea of donating to a single organization that is good at discovering and vetting local non-profits makes it simple and efficient for them to make a difference.

Whit Bertch was one of the first individuals involved with the expansion of Trial Lawyers' Charities into Orange County. "I liked the way they (LATLC) were able to give back and make a

difference to numerous charities each year. Their ability to marshal resources and deploy them for good is unmatched. I wanted to be a part of an organization that was dedicated to giving back to our own community," he added.

Daniel Ghyczy noted, "LATLC provides a rare opportunity to help dozens of local charities at the same time."

Chandra Spencer, who along with Ghyczy is on LATLC's board of directors, said, "I have been doing non-profit and charity volunteer work for a lot of years, both locally and internationally. When given the opportunity to get more involved with LATLC, I jumped at it. I like that we can help tap into all the resources in the plaintiff's bar to help a lot of different people and important causes."

Susan Kelley, who has been with OCTLC since the beginning said, "I have stayed involved because I have seen firsthand how impactful our donations and volunteer activities are and how they have helped so many people and organizations in the Orange County community."

Both LATLC and OCTLC provide real hands-on assistance to local organizations, in addition to financial support. And people have their "favorites." For Dwork it was "Blowing bubbles at the finish line of the LATLC/OCTLC Great Trike Giveaway" where children with different needs received adaptive tricycles.

"My all-time favorite activity had to be the very first volunteer project I participated in at St. Anne's before

Christmas [in 2007]," said Marcus.

"It opened my eyes and hooked me. Some of the people we were helping asked for so little, yet they needed so much. And I wanted to be a part of doing more and giving more."

Two activities are favorites for Kelley: Volunteering at *Beyond Blindness* and delivering holiday gifts and cheer to seniors at nursing homes in December.

For Spencer there were too many to list. "Though this year I would say Day of Dignity, taking place on October 28th. It will be an incredible event where we can partner with numerous organizations to help the unsheltered and provide them a day filled with dignity."

"The annual luau at the Newport Dunes [set for September 9]," is Bertch's favorite OCTLC event. "It's fun to embrace our 'OC' beach vibes while raising money for local charities. The sandy beach at the Back Bay, fire dancers, musical performers and Hawaiian food buffet are fire!"

For Ghyczy it goes both ways: "As a young lawyer, LATLC also allows me to network in a way that is meaningful, far beyond a typical 'Happy Hour' networking event. I've made many great friends at LATLC's volunteer events."

"I'm not ashamed to say," added Marcus, "that I get more out of LATLC and what we do than what I put into it. I am constantly impressed by the quality of people who are involved: attorneys, non-attorneys, vendors, sponsors, and volunteers. These are good people. That's who I want to surround myself with and that is who I want to be. An LATLC person."



Susan Kelley (Left)



Susan Kelley (Left)



Jonathan Dwork (left) then Susan Kelley next left



Whit Bertch (third from left)



Gerry Marcus (left)



Jonathan Dwork



Chandra Spencer



Daniel Ghyczy