



From the President

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Season of momentum

LEARNING, LEADING, AND LIFTING EACH OTHER UP

As summer gives way to fall, we find ourselves in a season of momentum. It's a time of renewed focus and purpose – a time to build on the connections we've made and carry that energy into the final stretch of the year. For OCTLA, that momentum has been driven by our members, who continue to show what it means to be *Stronger Together*.

Bridge the Gap – Mentorship and networking in the legal community

On August 14th, we hosted one of my favorite events of the year — and one we hope becomes a lasting tradition. *Bridge the Gap* was held for the very first time, and it exceeded all expectations. The event took place in Newport Beach at the home of Greg Bentley of Bentley & More, who generously opened his beautiful residence to welcome OCTLA members, new and young attorneys for an evening of conversation, mentorship, and connection.

We were honored to hear from a powerhouse panel of esteemed attorneys: Greg Bentley, Bill Shapiro, Geraldine Ly, Kim Valentine, Dan Hodes, Yoshi Kubota, and Cynthia Craig. Each of them generously shared personal stories and lessons learned – from early career challenges to the pivotal role mentorship played in their growth.

The common thread among their messages was clear: Mentorship isn't optional, it's essential. These leaders didn't just reflect on how they were shaped by mentors; they also emphasized the responsibility we all share to give back, support one another, and continue that legacy within OCTLA.

We extend a heartfelt thank you to our generous event sponsors who helped bring this inaugural gathering to life: Bentley & More, Law Offices of Geraldine Ly, Valentine Law Group, and William D. Shapiro Law, Inc. Their support reflects the very spirit of *Stronger Together*, and we're optimistic that *Bridge the Gap* will

become an annual cornerstone in our programming.

OCTLA shows up in Vegas

Many of our members are also making the trip to Las Vegas to attend the 2025 CAALA VEGAS at the Wynn – the largest trial lawyer convention in the nation. OCTLA will be well represented across the board, from educational programming to networking mixers and everything in between. These types of events are invaluable – not just for the CLE credits, but for the shared experiences, new ideas, and professional relationships that grow beyond county lines. We're proud to stand shoulder to shoulder with our CAALA colleagues in advancing plaintiff trial advocacy across the state.

September spotlight: ListServe Live

Looking ahead, I hope you'll join us for our MCLE event, *ListServe Live*, on September 25th at the Park Club in Costa Mesa. If you've attended in the past, you know how unique and valuable this program is. Attendees will have the chance to ask real-time case questions and receive thoughtful, strategic input from our expert panelists: Keith Bruno, Chelsea Sachs, and Ali Razavi.

These are the conversations we often wish we could have mid-case – and this event creates a space to have them. It's like tapping into the collective brain trust of the OCTLA community. This is where practical insight meets the power of collaboration. Don't miss it.

NEGU: Lifting up the fighters

Our commitment to service continues through our partnership with the Jessie Rees Foundation (NEGU – Never Ever Give Up). As many of you know, this foundation provides support, encouragement, and JoyJars® to children fighting cancer and their families. OCTLA is proud to support this

incredible mission, and your continued generosity is what allows us to make a meaningful difference.

As we head into the fall, we encourage members to support NEGU in any way you can – through donations, JoyJar sponsorships, or by joining us in person at one of their events. You'll walk away inspired and reminded of how powerful a simple act of kindness can be.

On the horizon: Top Gun 2025

It's hard to believe, but Top Gun is just around the corner. Our committee is already hard at work planning another unforgettable evening to recognize the very best of our profession. This event is more than just awards – it's a celebration of what trial lawyers can accomplish when we lead with heart, integrity, and a fierce commitment to justice.

Stay tuned for nominee announcements and sponsorship opportunities. We're counting on your support to make this year's event our best yet – and to help raise even more for NEGU in the process.

Our momentum is shared

As we begin the final quarter of the year, I want to thank each of you for the ways you've shown up – for your clients, your colleagues, and our OCTLA community. Whether it's through mentorship, sharing knowledge on the Listserve, attending an event, or making time to serve on a committee – it all matters.

The strength of OCTLA doesn't come from any one person. It comes from the collective will of our members to make each other better – to lead, lift, and learn together. That's how we move our profession forward. That's how we grow the next generation. That's how we make sure that no one has to take on the challenges of this work alone.

Let's keep the momentum going. Let's finish strong.