ACBA and ACBF begin to hold in-person events

By Zandy Dudiak

In the days before the COVID-19 pandemic, the ACBA had numerous events, programs and CLE courses each year that were live, in-person gatherings. Virus mitigation efforts taken by the bar association, like those implemented by most businesses and organizations, sent these gatherings onto virtual platforms for more than a year.

Since July 2021, some in-person events have been reintroduced. Several were held by late September, according to Executive Director David Blaner: the passing-the-gavel reception for incoming ACBA President Joe Williams, the retreat for the ACBA Board of Governors, and an orientation breakfast for Committee, Division and Section Chairs. In addition, 75 members attended the ACBA’s in-person Happy Hour event on Sept. 22 at Southern Tier Brewery sponsored by Fragasso Financial Advisors.

In August and September, the ACBA also offered three CLE seminars that gave attendees the choice of attending in-person or viewing the presentation virtually.

Normally, prior to the pandemic, 35 people would attend each CLE, so we tried to do some trial CLEs,” Blaner said. “We had nine in-person in one, 11 in another, 14 in the next one – relatively small numbers – and nearly three times the number virtually.

Membership and CLE Director Christina Daub said because of the low in-person attendance, the ACBA is encouraging virtual CLEs instead.

“It’s too labor intensive for us on the back end to continue to do this to accommodate such a small number of people,” she said.

And there are some other advantages. The ACBA’s “Bridge the Gap” CLE, which is required of all new attorneys, attracted attendees from throughout the state, including Philadelphia.

ACBA recommends voting “yes” for retention election candidates

By ACBA Staff

Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 2 and when Allegheny County voters head to the polls, they will be asked to vote “yes or no” regarding whether four local judges should be retained.

The ACBA polled its members during the spring, asking its members to indicate whether each Allegheny County judicial candidate running for retention should be “recommended” or “not recommended” for retention. This year, all of the Allegheny County judges who were included in the survey received a “recommended” rating. The ACBA Judicial Excellence Committee managed an umbrella campaign for these judges, recommending the public to “vote yes” and keep these four qualified judges on the bench.

“People are saying, ‘Look, we like the Zoom web conference seminars,’” he noted. “More than anything, people are realizing it’s extremely efficient.”

The Pennsylvania CLE Continuing Education Board has ruled that though Dec. 31, 2021, synchronous webinar CLEs are considered live, so technically attorneys can get all their credits through virtual CLEs – meaning a mix of live webinar and on-demand programs. Prior to COVID-19, attorneys had to earn a minimum of 12 CLEs a year, only six of which could be through distance learning, Daub said.

Blaner and Daub both said they are not sure whether the CLE Board will continue to allow that option in 2022, or whether the previous six CLE hours in-person/six CLE online course requirements will return.

Each ACBA section, committee and division has the authority to self-select how they want to conduct regular meetings. Some planned to re-evaluate after holding in-person meetings while others have just chosen to meet virtually or in a hybrid format via Zoom.

In the case of the orientation breakfast in September, the event was recorded and posted on the website for those who did not attend in-person. Though the ACBA can provide virtual options for most events, it does not have the technological capability to provide that option for all live programs held at external locations.

ACBA’s Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration ended up as a virtual event on Oct. 7. As of late September, the ACBA’s 34th Annual Western District Celebration is scheduled on Dec. 10 as a day-long, in-person event at the Westin Pittsburgh Convention Center.

For any in-person events held at the ACBA offices, masks are required, except when eating. Attendees are required to provide their name and email address in case contact tracing is necessary.

“We are asking people to be considerate of others,” Blaner said. “We’re trying to follow the CDC guidelines.”

All members were invited to join their ACBA colleagues for happy hour at Southern Tier Brewery on Sept. 22, the ACBA’s first in-person happy hour in more than 18 months! See more photos of the event on page 4.

---

PHOTO BY JAMES PIAGGIO

PHOTO BY JAMES PIAGGIO

PHOTO BY JAMES PIAGGIO
Voting for Judges Can be Confusing
OUR RATINGS SHOULD HELP!

ALLEGHENY COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Judge</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hon. Bruce Beemer</td>
<td>Highly Recommended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicola Henry-Taylor</td>
<td>Highly Recommended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Patrick Murphy</td>
<td>Not Recommended at this Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hon. Thomas P. Caulfield</td>
<td>Highly Recommended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard W. Hosking</td>
<td>Recommended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chuck Porter</td>
<td>Recommended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William (Bill) Caye</td>
<td>Recommended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hon. Elliot Howsie</td>
<td>Highly Recommended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiffany Sizemore</td>
<td>Recommended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jessel Costa III</td>
<td>Unqualified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chelsa Wagner</td>
<td>Not Recommended at this Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthony DeLuca</td>
<td>Highly Recommended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabrina Korbel</td>
<td>Highly Recommended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrenna Watson</td>
<td>Recommended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Patrick Flaherty</td>
<td>Not Recommended at this Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa Middleman</td>
<td>Recommended</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ACBA Judicial Ratings cover those candidates seeking seats on the bench of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, Superior Court of Pennsylvania, Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania and the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas.

No candidates from Allegheny County who requested a rating from the ACBA are on the ballot for the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, Superior Court of Pennsylvania and Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania. Visit PaVoteSmart.org for the Pennsylvania Bar Association’s ratings of all candidates running.

According to ACBA By-Laws the Judiciary Committee must rate all candidates running for the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas, whether they have requested a rating or not. All candidates for the Court of Common Pleas had the opportunity to be interviewed by the Judiciary Committee; those who opted not to be interviewed, were rated in absentia.

For more information visit JudicialVote2021.org.
Successful Board of Governors retreat enhances strategic planning efforts

By Joseph R. Williams

When I took the gavel as ACBA President, one of the initiatives that I wanted to define my term was the Association’s look into the future to identify how we can continue to be the best bar association on the planet. In furtherance of that goal, on July 13, 2021, the Board of Governors approved the formation of an ad hoc Strategic Planning Committee. Chaired by President-Elect Erica Laughlin, the Strategic Planning Committee consists of approximately 25 ACBA members representing various groups within the ACBA. The Committee, which we have coined our very own “think-tank,” consists of newly admitted lawyers and seasoned lawyers alike. Several current and past chairs from the ACBA’s three Divisions as well as various Sections and Committees, serve as well. Representatives from each of the ACBA’s affinity groups also serve.

“We made a deliberate decision to ensure diversity among the members of the committee by way of experience level, race, gender, practice area and level of association involvement to ensure the feedback we receive comes from a collective voice that’s truly representative of our membership,” explained Laughlin.

In the months of August and September, the Strategic Planning Committee held two meetings to begin the process of identifying areas of growth and refinement for the Association. For Laughlin, the work of the Committee is critical to the future of the organization.

“Goals are only aspirations without a strategic plan to achieve measured success,” she stated. “The full Committee has met twice to recognize the key issues we want to focus on as we consider ways to enhance the ACBA for the benefit of its members, our profession and the community.”

Having served the ACBA for approximately 30 years, Executive Director David Blaner understands the importance of introspection by the organization’s leadership and management. “One of the most important duties of a governing Board is to conduct strategic planning on a regular basis,” Blaner said. “Things change and bar associations need to adapt to the changes that are occurring in the legal profession. Strategic planning gives the Board and management the opportunity to ask where we are today as an organization and what issues we need to address in order to remain relevant to our members.”

As we come out of month 19 of COVID-19, the need to evaluate the services provided to ACBA members is timely. Strategic planning efforts have taken place outside of the designated Committee itself. Indeed, from September 9-11, 22 members of the ACBA Board of Governors gave up time from their busy schedules to attend a planning retreat on behalf of the Association. During the retreat, the Board addressed a number of issues which are impacting the progress of the Association. Some of the topics subject to Board deliberation included membership; financial matters; functioning of Committees, Sections and Divisions; and governance.

“The board retreat was a good opportunity to hear from other ACBA leaders about their perspectives and what they have heard from our colleagues in the various Committees, Divisions and Sections,” said ACBA Secretary Regina Wilson. “It is important that we now embrace the feedback that we are receiving and identify goals for the Association as we move out of the pandemic and begin our return to normal.”

Following the retreat, the Strategic Planning Committee convened again to review the observations from the Board of Governors. Several subcommittees were established so that the ACBA think-tank can address specific issues and begin developing action items and goals for the ACBA to undertake moving forward.

As part of strategic planning efforts, member engagement will continue to be a top priority. While the pandemic has posed a series of challenges for the ACBA, it has also presented new opportunities. Many Committees, Divisions and Sections have observed increased attendance at meetings held on Zoom. This enhanced member engagement has proven to be beneficial to the various ACBA groups. Correlatively, most
IS YOUR CHILD INTERESTED IN ATTENDING YALE OR THE UNIVERSITY OF PARIS?

Under the will of Kennedy T. Friend, a distinguished Pittsburgh attorney, the children of Allegheny County attorneys who desire to attend either Yale University or the University of Paris are eligible for scholarships to those universities. The scholarships are available for students pursuing a graduate or undergraduate degree in any field of study at those institutions, not just law.

Don’t delay – scholarship applications should be submitted at the same time as the admission application to the respective institution is submitted.

GET A SCHOLARSHIP THROUGH THE KENNEDY T. FRIEND EDUCATION FUND

For more information, visit www.ACBF.org/Kennedy-Scholarship-Fund

Or contact Angelina Lowers of PNC Institutional Asset Management at 412-807-3309.
The advantage of better technology in a small law firm

By Mark Haddad

Law firm business leaders have continually stressed the need to have the right technology in place to move their firms down the path to success. Previously, I have highlighted some of the lessons that leaders of small law firms can learn from their peers’ firms, though not necessarily from their peer managing partners. Instead, we looked at the 2020 Small Law Firm Business Leaders report to explore the insights that business professionals who are not attorneys can share.

People who have different training and experience from attorneys can bring invaluable perspectives into the decision-making process, particularly when those people are trained business professionals whose sole focus within a law firm is on improving the business operations of the firm.

One of the key areas highlighted by these business pros who help lead firms with 50 or fewer attorneys was the need to have the right technology in place. Clearly, this is an important insight for law firms of any size, but perhaps especially for smaller firms that may not have the benefit of a dedicated tech officer or even a full-time business manager.

In fact, 66 percent of these business pros, when asked to identify risks to their firm’s future profitability, identified underperforming lawyers as a major challenge. In fact, fully 27 percent said that underperforming lawyers posed a high risk to their firms’ profitability.

Now, this doesn’t mean that these business leaders lack confidence in their firms’ lawyers; instead, it seems much more likely that this is simply an indicator that some lawyers lack the right tools to deliver more productivity, service, and performance for their clients.

Given the uncertainty of today’s world, I think this is perhaps especially true. Over the course of the pandemic, many small law firm lawyers found themselves trying to catch up to the technological requirements of remote working; and more importantly, struggled to keep pace on how their clients were engaging digitally. These challenges represented a range of real struggles that necessitates more meaningful tech adoption among law firms of all sizes, but perhaps more among smaller firms.

Addressing the tech challenge

This challenge of technology prowess is not unknown to many of these small firm business leaders – indeed, it is one they say they intend to address. Some 46 percent of respondents to the Small Law Firm Business Leaders report said that they “definitely will” be using tech to help cut costs in the coming year. In fact, greater use of technology was the single most-cited step given to improve performance. And the pandemic has played a role in highlighting this need as well, with 73 percent of respondents saying that their focus on greater use of technology increased as a result of their experiences in 2020.

The Small Law Firm Business Leaders report provides some great insight into what types of technologies these firms are using or plan to adopt. The vast majority of small law firm leaders say their firms have adopted essential tech tools, such as legal research tech (with 79 percent of respondents saying they), websites and internet presence tools (70 percent), eBilling solutions (67 percent), and financial management systems (64 percent).

But I think the more important story lies in the firms that find themselves among the minority that report they have no plan to adopt these kinds of basic technologies. Among these small law firms, 12 percent say they have no plan to start using tools like website or internet presence tools, with an identical percentage eschewing any sort of eBilling technology adoption. And further, a dramatically larger percentage, 58 percent, reported they have no plans to adopt any sort of client relationship management technology.

It’s not as though these business leaders don’t understand the potential advantages of better tech. On the same survey, the top two reasons cited by respondents for adopting better technology were i) to reduce the time taken to complete tasks – a leading pain point for small law firm attorneys who need to spend more time actually practicing law; and ii) to improve client service.

Continued on page 14
Allegheny County Council unanimously passes paid sick leave legislation

By Kimberly J. Kisner

Allegheny County Council unanimously passed a bill Tuesday, September 14, requiring most private employers with 26 or more employees to provide employees with as many as five paid sick days per year. The sick leave bill, revised after County Executive Rich Fitzgerald vetoed it in March due to procedural deficiencies, guarantees employees with as many as five paid sick days per year. The sick leave bill, initially passed in December 2020 when the requirement to provide paid leave under the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) was expiring.

The city’s 2015 sick leave law took effect on March 15, 2020, after the city’s authority to pass such a law was challenged in court. The law requires businesses with 15 or more employees to provide 40 hours of paid sick leave per year and those with fewer than 15 employees 24 hours of sick leave each year. Neither county nor city leave laws will provide any tax incentives for employers providing paid sick leave. Although the mandate to provide leave under FFCRA expired on December 31, 2020, employers who voluntarily provide paid leave under FFCRA are entitled to take tax credits extended through The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) through at least September 30, 2021. With the federal announcement of a vaccine mandate for employers of 100 or more, Congress may revisit extending additional tax relief to employers who provide employees time off for COVID-19 testing, illness or vaccination.

Employees are required to provide written notice to employees of their paid leave rights. Employees must work 90 days before they can begin to use accrued leave. Employers are not required to pay out unused sick leave at termination. Employees who are rehired within six months of termination shall have their accrued sick leave reinstated upon re-commencement of employment. Employers who violate the policy can be fined by the county up to $100 per occurrence and may also subject themselves to unwanted attention and scrutiny. Allegheny County’s sick leave law comes a year and a half after it was initially passed in December 2020 with the requirement to provide paid sick leave under FFCRA.

If you have questions regarding Allegheny County’s Paid Sick Leave or any other employment-related legal matter, please contact Leech Tishman’s Employment & Labor Practice Group. Kimberly J. Kisner is a Partner with Leech Tishman, and a member of the firm’s Employment & Labor Group. Kimberly is based out of the Pittsburgh office and can be reached at 412-261-1600 or kkisner@leechtishman.com.

Office Depot, OfficeMax discounts

Through the ACBA’s partnership with Office Depot and OfficeMax, individual members and entire firms can enjoy discounts of up to 55 percent on the purchase of office supplies and discounts of up to 70 percent on printing and copying services. Firms that spend $6,000 or more on office supplies annually are eligible for additional discounts. For more information or to enroll, see ACBA.org/OfficeDepot or contact David Jarvis at David.Jarvis@officedepot.com.
2021 Allegheny County Bar Association and Foundation Leadership

ACBA Board of Governors

**ONE-YEAR (Exp. 2022)**

- **PRESIDENT**
  - JOSEPH R. WILLIAMS
  - Pollock Begg

- **PRESIDENT-ELECT**
  - ERICA L. LAUGHLIN
  - Strassburger McKenna Gutnick & Gefsky

- **SECRETARY**
  - REGINA WILSON
  - K&L Gates LLP

- **TREASURER**
  - DANIEL E. FITZSIMMONS

- **IMMEDIATE PAST-PRESIDENT**
  - ELIZABETH L. HUGHES
  - UPMC Corporate Legal Department

**TWO-YEAR (Exp. 2023)**

- **ONE-YEAR**
  - DANA L. BACSI
  - Port Authority of Allegheny County

  - HON. JEFFREY A. MANNING
  - Court of Common Pleas - Criminal Division

  - JEAN E. NOVAK
  - Strassburger McKenna Gutnick & Gefsky

- **TWO-YEAR**
  - KERI LEE CAPPELLA
  - Gentile Horoho & Avalli, P.C.

  - DANIELLE DIETRICH
  - Strassburger McKenna Gutnick & Gefsky

  - A. PATRICIA DIULUS-MYERS
  - Segalow & Associates, P.C.

- **THREE-YEAR**
  - SAMUEL W. BRAVER
  - Dentons Cohen & Grigsby

  - AMY J. COCO
  - DiBella Weinheimer

  - MARIAH PASSARELLI
  - Cozen O’Connor

**THREE-YEAR (Exp. 2024)**

- **CHIEF JUDGE**
  - MARK R. HORNAK
  - U.S. District Court Western District of PA

- **PRESIDENT JUDGE**
  - KIM BERKELEY CLARK
  - Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County

- **PBA GOVERNOR - ZONE 12**
  - LAWRENCE R. CHABAN
  - AlpernSchubert P.C.

- **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**
  - DAVID A. BLANER
  - Allegheny County Bar Association

- **ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**
  - DIANE McMILLEN
  - Allegheny County Bar Association

ACBA Committee, Division and Section Chairs

- **ACBA COURT RULES COMMITTEE**
  - THOMAS E. REILLY
  - Thomas E. Reilly, P.C.

- **ACBA JUDICIAL EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE (PAC)**
  - ELIZABETH L. HUGHES
  - UPMC Corporate Legal Department

- **ACBA POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE (PAC)**
  - LAURA C. BUNTING
  - Jackson Lewis P.C.

- **ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION COMMITTEE**
  - SUNU M. PILLAI
  - Saul Ewing Arnstein & Lehr LLP

- **AMICUS CURiae BRIEF COMMITTEE**
  - FREDERICK N. FRANK
  - Frank, Gale, Bails, Murcko & Pocrass, P.C.

- **APPELLATE PRACTICE COMMITTEE**
  - CORRIE A. WOODS
  - Woods Law Offices PLLC

- **ARTS AND THE LAW COMMITTEE**
  - SHANE D. VALENZI
  - Eckert Seamans Cherin & Mellott, LLC

- **ASIAN ATTORNEYS COMMITTEE**
  - CAROLINE K. LI (CO-CHAIR)
  - K&L Gates LLP

- **ASIAN ATTORNEYS COMMITTEE**
  - MARK C. ZHENG (CO-CHAIR)
  - Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease LLP

Contact information for ACBA members can be found at www.ACBA.org/Directory.
ACBA Committee, Division and Section Chairs (cont.)

AUDIT COMMITTEE
JANA S. FAI
Whiteford Taylor & Preston, LLP

BANKRUPTCY AND COMMERCIAL LAW SECTION
ABAGALE E. STEEDL
Steidl & Steidl

BENCH-BAR CONFERENCE COMMITTEE
JAY A. BLECHMAN
Steiner & Blechman, LLC

BY-LAWS COMMITTEE
AMY J. COCO
DiBella Wertheimer

CIVIL LITIGATION SECTION
ERIN LUCAS HAMILTON
Balaban & Ingwersen & Bruney PC

CIVIL RIGHTS LITIGATION COMMITTEE
ALLISON R. GENARD
Campbell电量, P.C.

COLLABORATIVE LAW COMMITTEE
BETH MACKEY BOROUHMANN
(CO-CHAIR) New Day Family Law, LLC

COLLABORATIVE LAW COMMITTEE
AMANDA C. COOK (CO-CHAIR)
Cook & Associates

COMMITTEE FOR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
VINCENT O. JOHNSON (CO-CHAIR)
University of Pittsburgh School of Law

COMMITTEE ON LAW AND DISABILITY
IAN S. MICHEL (CO-CHAIR)
Ridler Law, LLC

COMMITTEE ON LAW AND DISABILITY
WESLEY S. SPEARY (CO-CHAIR)
City of PGH Commission on Human Relations

CONSTRUCTION LAW SECTION
LORI WISNIEWSKI AZZARA
Cohen Seglar Feller Greenhill & Taransky, PC

CORPORATE BANKING AND BUSINESS LAW SECTION
MAXWELL BRISKMAN STANFIELD
Meyer, Unkovic & Scott LLP

CRIMINAL LITIGATION SECTION
KEVIN F. MCCARTHY
Allegheny County District Attorney’s Office

ELDER LAW COMMITTEE
ROBIN L. FRANK
Raphael Ramsden & Behers PC

ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY LAW SECTION
JEFFREY R. BAILEY
Allegheny County Health Department

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
JOSEPH R. WILLIAMS
Pollock-Begg

FAMILY LAW SECTION
ELISABETH W. MOLNAR
Raphael, Ramsden & Behers, PC

FEDERAL COURT SECTION
JOHN A. SCHWAB
Petersino-Gorden Allen Bronick & Karpinski, LLP

FINANCE COMMITTEE and SUB-COMMITTEES
DANIEL E. FITZSIMMONS

FINANCE COMMITTEE
ROBIN L. FRANK
Raphael Ramsden & Behers PC

GENDER EQUALITY COMMITTEE
BEVERLY A. BLOCK (CO-CHAIR)
Block & Associates, LLC

GENDER EQUALITY COMMITTEE
CHRISTIE B. TILLAPAUGH (CO-CHAIR)
Dentons Cohen & Grigsby PC

HEALTH AND WELLNESS COMMITTEE
ALEXANDRIA M. POPOVNAK
Dick’s Sporting Goods, Inc.

HEALTH LAW SECTION
CATHARINE V. WADHWANI
Fox Rothschild LLP

HISPANIC ATTORNEYS COMMITTEE
SIMONE L. DELERME HARRIS
(CO-CHAIR) Thermo Fisher Scientific

HISPANIC ATTORNEYS COMMITTEE
JUAN C. PAZ-ROSARIO (CO-CHAIR)
Zagler & Associates

HOMER S. BROWN DIVISION (HBSD)
MORGAN J. MOODY
KibbeRice

IMMIGRATION LAW COMMITTEE
J. KATHERINE DRABECKI
Dentons Cohen & Grigsby PC

LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT LAW SECTION
LISA L. GARRETT
Dentons Cohen & Grigsby PC

LAW DAY COMMITTEE
KATHERINE M. KENNEDY
Allegheny County CTR Adoption Legal Unit

LAWYER PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY COMMITTEE
AMY J. COCO
DiBella Wertheimer

LAWYER REFERRAL COMMITTEE
RYAN D. VERY
Very Law PLLC

LEGAL TECHNOLOGY AND E-DISCOVERY COMMITTEE
ROY E. LEONARD
Leonard, PLLC

LGBT RIGHTS COMMITTEE
MICHAEL R. KOMO
K&L Gates LLP

MANAGING PARTNERS COMMITTEE
DONALD C. BLUEDORFF II
Babit, Calland, Clements and Zemler, PC

MEDICAL MARIJUANA AND HEMP COMMITTEE
JEAN E. NOVAK
Strassburger McInerney Gutnick & Gefsky

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE
LAUREN ALEXIS MELFA CATANZARITE
Marcus & Stapes LLPC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee</th>
<th>Chair</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE</td>
<td>HOWARD J. SCHULBERG (CO-CHAIR)</td>
<td>City of PGH Commission on Human Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE</td>
<td>CARL J. SPINDLER (CO-CHAIR)</td>
<td>DFL Legal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOMINATING COMMITTEE</td>
<td>ERICA L. LAUGHLIN</td>
<td>Statutory Montana Gutnick &amp; Gehrky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NONPROFIT LAW COMMITTEE</td>
<td>TERESA M. CONNERTON (CO-CHAIR)</td>
<td>Law Firm of Teresa M. Connerton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NONPROFIT LAW COMMITTEE</td>
<td>MICHAEL DUTKOVICH (CO-CHAIR)</td>
<td>Owen Law Group, LLC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAST PRESIDENTS COMMITTEE</td>
<td>HOWARD J. SCHULBERG</td>
<td>Schulberg Mediation LLC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROBATE AND TRUST LAW SECTION</td>
<td>THOMAS E. CROWLEY</td>
<td>Aligned Partners Trust Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROFESSIONAL ETHICS COMMITTEE</td>
<td>MARK T. VUONO</td>
<td>Vuono &amp; Gray, LLC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REAL PROPERTY SECTION</td>
<td>JENNIFER SOMMA</td>
<td>First American Title Insurance Co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCHOOL AND MUNICIPAL LAW SECTION</td>
<td>KATHERINE A. BEERS</td>
<td>Tucker Arensberg, PC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCIAL SECURITY PRACTITIONERS COMMITTEE</td>
<td>GLENN S. SINKO</td>
<td>Sinko Zimmerman, LLC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOLE AND SMALL FIRM PRACTITIONERS SECTION</td>
<td>LARS U. LANGE</td>
<td>Law Office of Lari Lange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPECIAL FEE DETERMINATION COMMITTEE</td>
<td>MELANIE SHANNON ROTHEY</td>
<td>Court of Common Pleas - Family Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPORTS LAW COMMITTEE</td>
<td>DANIEL W. KUNZ</td>
<td>Kunz Law Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAXATION COMMITTEE</td>
<td>CHRISTINE M. GREEN</td>
<td>Clark Hill PLC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNAUTHORIZED PRACTICE OF LAW COMMITTEE</td>
<td>AMY L. SCHULMAN</td>
<td>PA Office of Attorney General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOMEN IN THE LAW DIVISION (WLD)</td>
<td>JULIE W. VANNEMAN</td>
<td>Dentons Cohen &amp; Graggly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORKERS’ COMPENSATION SECTION</td>
<td>MICHAEL V. QUATRINI</td>
<td>Quatrini Rafferty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YOUNG LAWYERS DIVISION (YLD)</td>
<td>ASRA HASHMI</td>
<td>Jackson Lewis P.C.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contact information for ACBA members can be found at www.ACBA.org/Directory.
PHOTOS BY JAMES PIAGGIO

ACBA President Joe Williams, Hon. Alexander P. Bicket, Hon. Mary Jane Bowes, Hon. Randy Todd and ACBA President-Elect Erica Laughlin take a break from socializing for a photo during the Retention Election Cocktail Reception on Sept. 30 at the ACBA headquarters. All members were invited to the fundraising reception in the newly renovated ACBA headquarters to help keep these qualified judges on the bench.

Eric Soller, Brennan Hart and Harrison Zelt encourage you to “vote yes” in the upcoming Nov. 2 General Election.

Retention Election Cocktail Reception

The Hon. Alexander P. Bicket, ACBA Immediate Past-President Elizabeth Hughes, Hon. Mary Jane Bowes and Hon. Randy Todd encouraged members to “vote yes” to keep these qualified judges on the bench.

Chris Thomas, Chris Marsili, Marla Presley and Hon. Alexander P. Bicket enjoyed hors d’oeuvres, cocktails and a beer tasting conducted by the brewers of Voodoo Brewing.

When the evidence disappears, we get it.

Superior computer forensics can help you win cases. And as lawyers and electronic data experts, we get what you need – on every level. Discover more about our capabilities, forensics and e-discovery. Call 412-325-4033. Or visit bit-x-bit.com.

What’s Next?

Business resilience is being tested daily.

Companies across Allegheny County and around the world are assessing what’s next for their people, their customers, their organization, and their future. At BDO, we’re helping clients persevere during this time of disruption, and position themselves to recover, and ultimately thrive again.

www.bdo.com/ResilienceAgenda

Jim Carroll, Director
412-315-2520 / jcarroll@bdo.com

John Petracosta, Director
412-315-2478 / petracostaj@bdo.com

Justin Lamanna, Legal Channel Business Development
412-315-2327 / jlamanna@bdo.com

BDO, 339 Sixth Avenue, 8th Floor, Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Accountants and Advisors
www.bdo.com
I love LawPay! I’m not sure why I waited so long to get it set up. — Law Firm in Ohio

Trusted by more than 150,000 professionals, LawPay is a simple, secure solution that allows you to easily accept credit and eCheck payments online, in person, or through your favorite practice management tools.

- 22% increase in cash flow with online payments
- Vetted and approved by all 50 state bars, 70+ local and specialty bars, the ABA, and the ALA
- 62% of bills sent online are paid in 24 hours

Get started at lawpay.com/acba 888-934-0754

Data based on an average of firm accounts receivables increases using online billing solutions.

LawPay is a registered agent of Wells Fargo Bank N.A., Concord, CA and Synovus Bank, Columbus, GA.
In Memoriam

Henry D. Sinopoli Ph.D.

ACBA affiliate member Henry D. Sinopoli Ph.D. passed away on Sept. 10, with his wife at his side, as the result of his bicycle being struck by a vehicle on his way to the YMCA in the city of Butler. Sinopoli was born on July 28, 1945, in Pittsburgh, to Henry A. and Millie (Santillo) Sinopoli.

He was a veteran, having served honorably in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam conflict. Dr. Sinopoli retired as a public school superintendent in June 2006, from Keystone School District in Knox, after serving more than 35 years in public and private education, as a teacher of English, assistant principal, the principal, supervisor of special education, director of human resources and superintendent.

He received his undergraduate degree from Duquesne University, along with degrees and certifications from Point Park University, Youngstown State University, Carnegie Mellon University H. John Heinz III School of Public Policy and Management program and completed an earned doctorate at Indiana University of Pennsylvania in administrative leadership. Sinopoli was a graduate of Duquesne University, Paralegal and Benefits Institute. He was a certified professional business coach, trained by Action Coach International.

In 2005 and 2006, Sinopoli was selected as part of a Fulbright scholar program and completed an earned doctorate at Indiana University of Pennsylvania in administrative leadership. Sinopoli was a graduate of Duquesne University, Paralegal and Benefits Institute. He was a certified professional business coach, trained by Action Coach International.

In 2005 and 2006, Sinopoli was selected as part of a Fulbright Scholarship team to participate in the Sino-American Principals’ Forum, where he taught at Suzhou University, Beijing University and Shanghai University. His academic focus centered on professional development for school administrators. He created and certified a United States trademark for specialty clothing and marketed and managed the sales process. Most recently, Sinopoli immensely enjoyed working as a TIPS staff at the Butler County Courthouse.

Sinopoli is survived by his wife of 28 years, Jocelyn, his mother-in-law, Leona R. Howard of Butler, his brothers-in-law, Craig (Margaret) Howard of Painesville, La., Gene (Sheila) Howard of Washington, Pa., and Curt (Mary) Howard of Murfreesboro, Tenn.; his sister-in-law, Joan (Ray) Howard Harris of Mars, 13 nieces and nephews, along with their nine spouses and 26 great-nieces and great-nephews. In addition to his human family, he is survived by his Portuguese water dog, Bentley, and was preceded in death by his beloved yellow lab in death by his beloved yellow lab mix, Xilo, adopted at the “Fur Ball.” Sinopoli was also preceded in death by his father, Henry A. Sinopoli, his mother, Millie (Santillo) Sinopoli, his father-in-law, Clarence W. Howard, and a brother-in-law, David C. Howard.

Charles “Chuck” Vater

Charles “Chuck” Vater, age 71 of Upper St. Clair, passed away on Sept. 18. Beloved husband of Diane, of Upper St. Clair, passed away on Sept. 18. Beloved husband of Diane, loving father to Allison (Matt) and Elizabeth (Mike) and proud grandfather of Ryan and Kate. He is also survived by his brother Joseph (Nancy) and sister Mary Helen (Michael) as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

A graduate of the University of Notre Dame and the University of Pittsburgh School of Law, Chuck built a 45-year career with Tucker Arensberg, where he served on the Board of Directors and as Managing Partner, as well as Chair of the Estate & Trust Group. Chuck shared his expertise with his profession as Chairman of the Probate & Trust Section of the Allegheny County Bar Association and as President of the Estate Planning Council of Pittsburgh, and with his community as Board President of The Children’s Home of Pittsburgh and Lemieux Family Center.

In addition to his professional success, one of his favorite accomplishments was helping his wife and daughters launch their own respective LLCs. Nothing brought him more joy than in his role as a family man and sharing his time with those he loved. From coaching his daughters to playing board games around the kitchen table to reading to his grandsons, he was at his best around his family and fiercely proud of them.

He was at his happiest at the beach, sitting in a chair with his feet in the water, a book in one hand and a beer in the other, surrounded by his family. To know Chuck was to know a man who was an avid sports fan who loved Notre Dame and all things baseball. Many friends and colleagues also knew him for his substantial collection of unique beer labels, for which he was always on the hunt for a new one.

According to a statement from his firm, “Tucker Arensberg mourns the loss of Chuck Vater, a distinguished lawyer, leader and friend who spent his entire 46 year career with our firm. Chuck was renowned throughout the Pittsburgh region for his Estates and Trust practices where he gave valuable advice and counsel to families and businesses. He was recognized for many years as a Best Lawyer and Super Lawyer in his field. Chuck served the firm in many roles throughout the years including that of Managing Shareholder. But most importantly he was a thoughtful and attentive colleague and mentor.”

Need clients? The Lawyer Referral Service can help bring them to you.

For details, contact Whitney Hughes at 412-402-6703 or whughes@acba.org.

To learn more, see GetA Pittsbugh Lawyer.com.
children of ACBA members: Get scholarship to Yale, University of Paris

This is the time of year when many high school students are applying to college. Did you know that the children of Allegheny County attorneys are eligible for significant scholarships to Yale and the University of Paris? Thanks to the Kennedy T. Friend Scholarship Fund. Kennedy T. Friend was a Pittsburgh-area attorney who died in 1929. In his will, he left funds that “shall be devoted to the education at Yale University or the University of Paris, France, of such child, or children of the members of the Bar of Allegheny County as may be designated by the said Trustees, or their successors.” To be eligible, students must be the children of an attorney with a principal office in Allegheny County. For more information, visit ACBF.org/Kennedy-Scholarship-Fund or contact Angelina Lowers at angelina.lowers@pnc.com or 412-807-3309.

If you have an idea for a substantive law article or would be interested in authoring one, please email Jennifer Pulice at jpulice@acba.org.
Judicial mediation effort helps keep civil cases moving during pandemic

By Ron Cichowicz

While for many people the COVID-19 pandemic ground all activity to a halt, many sectors of society, faced with tasks that couldn’t or perhaps shouldn’t wait, found ways to keep the work flowing.

One example is in the U.S. District Court of the Western District of Pennsylvania, where about 19 months ago, jury trials were essentially suspended to adhere to social distancing and other public health directives and restrictions.

“We all had to expand our thinking quickly to deal with events that otherwise wouldn’t be a challenge or an issue,” said Chief Justice Mark R. Hornak. “We needed to adopt different mechanisms to allow for the safe and appropriate operations for the courts.”

Judge Hornak explained that the U.S. District Court is obligated by law to give priority for trials to criminal cases.

“Before the pandemic arrived, cases were marching toward trial in the normal course,” he said. “But then suddenly, we were not conducting jury trials, civil or criminal. We knew that when we were back to conducting jury trials, criminal cases will have to go first. But we still want to make sure civil cases get prompt treatment.”

The Western District of Pennsylvania is one of the federal courts with a mandatory Alternative Dispute Resolution program (ADR) for most civil cases, which often allows for a quicker and more satisfying remedy to a dispute than a court might order.

As explained on the U.S. District Court of the Western District of Pennsylvania website, “the ADR program gives parties more flexibility to shape the dispute resolution and outcome and aids our Court in meeting its mission to preserve and enhance the rule of law while providing an impartial and accessible forum for the just, timely and economical resolution of legal proceedings.”

But some cases are not resolved in this way and the Court had a number of cases that, but for the pandemic, would be slated to go to a jury trial with a federal judge presiding.

“We knew there would be a delay so, for the duration of the pandemic, if the parties thought it might be helpful, we had a significant number of judges volunteer to conduct settlement conferences,” Judge Hornak explained.

“The cases had to be trial-ready, and a judge other than the trial judge would conduct the settlement conference.”

An additional critical element to facilitating the Court’s existing ADR process and this special settlement conference approach was the Court’s long-standing ADR process.

Judge Hornak said the judicial mediation effort has yielded successful results. He said that, since the beginning of the pandemic, about 80 trial-ready cases have been placed into the process and, of the ones that conducted the settlement process, about 70 percent concluded with a settlement.

“Of those cases brought to a conclusion, all parties agreed the result was fair, just and reasonable,” Judge Hornak said.

Judge Hornak credited the leadership for the judicial mediation program to Judge Marilyn Horan and Judge Robert Colville, who stepped up and served, as Judge Hornak described, “as air traffic controllers” for the process.

He also noted that more than a dozen District and Magistrate Judges volunteered to serve as settlement judges for the program.

“We saw tremendous leadership by our colleagues and involved counsel, as well as yeoman service by ADR Neutrals in our traditional ADR process all during the pandemic,” he said.

Judge Hornak said the current thinking is that this approach had its genesis in the COVID-19 pandemic, and when the Court’s trial schedule allows for the more traditional scheduling of civil jury trials, the need for it will have likely passed.

“We assume that once the pandemic ends, any delay in conducting civil jury trials will no longer be there,” he said. “But this was a unique moment for our Court to utilize a unique method to assist litigants to resolve trial-ready cases in a timely way.”

Our Health Care Power of Attorney and Living Will documents are available on the ACBA website for free at ACBA.org/ POA-Living-Will.

LIVE WEBINAR
GrayDIVORCE
The complexities of divorce during the retirement phase of life.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2021 | NOON

In our presentation we will focus on the added complexities that come with a divorce after the age 50. While you’ve likely done a lot of the right things to prepare for your retirement, a divorce, especially for those so far along in their careers, can really shake things up. We will identify some of the items that tend to require extra attention for those who are considering a divorce while moving into or are already in the retirement phase of life.

PRESENTERS:
Mallory Labik, CFP®, CDFA®
Financial Advisor, Financial Planning Analyst, Fragasso Financial Advisors

Lee A. Anderson, Esq
Shareholder, GRB Law

Register now for this complimentary webinar at: https://bit.ly/graydivorcewebinar
News and Notes

Mary McKinney Flaherty, Of Counsel with Frank, Gale, Bails, Murcko & Pocrass, P.C. and Immediate Past Chair of the ACBA Women in the Law Division, has graduated from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business. Mary received an MBA with High Honors and was named an Amy and Richard F. Wallman Scholar, in the top 5 percent of the graduating class. Her coursework concentrated in decision making, strategy, behavioral economics and finance. Additionally, upon the nomination of the Dean of the Chicago Booth Executive MBA program, Poets & Quants Magazine selected Mary as one of its “2021 Best and Brightest & Quants.” P&Q gives this honor to only two students per MBA class, those who “personify excellence through their contributions to the class, academic performance, extracurricular involvement, professional achievement and personal intangibles.”

MBA with High Honors and was named an Amy and Richard F. Wallman Scholar, in the top 5 percent of the graduating class. Her coursework concentrated in decision making, strategy, behavioral economics and finance. Additionally, upon the nomination of the Dean of the Chicago Booth Executive MBA program, Poets & Quants Magazine selected Mary as one of its “2021 Best and Brightest & Quants.” P&Q gives this honor to only two students per MBA class, those who “personify excellence through their contributions to the class, academic performance, extracurricular involvement, professional achievement and personal intangibles.”

Mary McKinney Flaherty

Bar Briefs

Mary McKinney Flaherty

L&A

LOGAN & LOGAN

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

EMPLOYMENT LAW ATTORNEYS

REPRESENTING

PHYSICIANS, EXECUTIVES, MANAGERS, PROFESSIONALS AND SMALL BUSINESSES

• EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS
• NON-COMPETE AGREEMENTS
• BREACH OF CONTRACT

1-800-959-0958
jloganlaw@gmail.com
510 Grant Street, Suite 201
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Edwin W. Russell will practice in the firm’s Private Clients Group. Russell’s practice focuses on estate and trust planning, administration and related litigation matters as well as counseling clients on taxation matters. He also prepares sophisticated estate plans for clients designed to minimize Federal Estate and Gift Taxes while focusing on the client’s wealth transfer and business succession goals.