

Anastasios T. Savvaides



As I begin my term as President of CTLA this summer, I would like to congratulate Stephanie Roberge for the admirable job she did under very trying circumstances.

She took over the presidency of our organization from Paul Slager at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and

met each and every challenge head-on. Courts were still largely at a standstill so she made numerous efforts to get things moving again, including starting a dialogue with the Judicial Branch and forming a Jury Review Committee. The Judicial Branch was forced to adapt, eventually resuming some semblance of normal operations with remote hearings and appearances. The return of the jury trial remained elusive but with vaccinations ahead of schedule and social distancing changes made to courtrooms those too are imminent.

Instead of dealing with the usual legislative session she had to navigate three different legislative sessions dealing with the police accountability bill, numerous COVID-19 bills which were proposed to deal with statutes of limitations and various forms of immunity along with the usual defense of pro-business legislation and finally the most arduous piece of legislation to revamp the Claims Commission and get those claims moving again. Stephanie, we are grateful for your efforts and dedication, thank you!

I was hopeful last summer that by now we would be back to gathering in person and I'd be able to address you all directly at our regular Annual Meeting. Unfortunately, that's not the case, but I am confident we will be together soon. I am mindful of the challenges the pandemic has wrought on our profession over the last fifteen months. The interruptions to our way of practicing law have been all-encompassing. Through it all, CTLA, and the remarkable staff including Executive Director Joan Maloney and Director of CLE Katie Marino, have been committed to assisting our members during this difficult time, whether by conducting business virtually, offering free CLE webinars and continuing to pursue our mission "to protect individual rights through fair laws and access to justice".

I am committed to this mission and with the support of all the arms of our great organization I know we will continue to move forward. One of the pillars of our strength as trial lawyers is the right to trial by jury. As our nation attends to overcoming COVID-19, and we have seen great progress in the last few months, we continue to push forward in our attempts to get jury trials back on track. Our strength is in our membership. I call on those of you who work tirelessly to promote our mission to continue to do so, and for those of you that perhaps haven't had the opportunity to do so yet, to get involved and make a difference.

While my term will start in a similar fashion as Stephanie's did, I am confident that we will resume in person gatherings soon. Hopefully, that will mean a return to our Annual Meeting next summer, in-person CLE, Cooking for a Cause, the charity softball game and so many other wonderful events. I look forward to the coming year and all the challenges and opportunities it will undoubtedly present.

Thank you and stay well,

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