

# NEVADA LAWYER

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# Message from the President

Connie Akridge, Esq., State Bar of Nevada President



The future of the  
SBN is bright  
because of YOU!

“Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future.”

– John F. Kennedy –

When we meet in San Diego at the Hotel Del Coronado later this month for the State Bar of Nevada’s Annual Meeting, the theme will be “The Future of the Practice of Law.”

We will discuss the many challenges Nevada lawyers face—struggling economy, changing technology, globalization of the practice of law, the increasingly rapid pace of legal analysis and the consolidation of law firms to create mega firms, increasing client demands for alternative billing arrangements and how attorneys can position their practices in the recovering economy.

We surely face challenges now and in the future but I am proud to report that for the past year, we’ve worked together to poise the SBN to take the future head on:

- With the invaluable assistance of Nevada Supreme Court Justice Nancy Saitta and the Professionalism Summit Committee, we implemented a pilot Transitioning Into Practice (TIP) program to help our new members as they join the practice of law. Many of our most revered members stepped up to serve as mentors or be part of the TIP Standing Committee. This program was implemented at a time when new law graduates are struggling to find jobs and pay off hefty student loans.
- In December 2011, the Board of Governors (BOG) voted to move forward with buying an existing office building in Clark County since the SBN has outgrown the historic “Wengert House.” We are working with a real estate broker to find a building that can serve as the new home of the SBN in Clark County for many years to come. Finding a building with sufficient space for staff to efficiently and comfortably perform the business of the SBN and for adequate member meeting space is our goal.
- The BOG has considered issues such as the increasing pressure to adopt the Uniform Bar Exam along with other states with the goal of erasing restrictions on the practice of law across state lines, and dealing with

issues that come with an aging population such as recognizing when an attorney is no longer competent.

- We've assisted the Nevada Law Foundation and Access to Justice Commission in realizing their goal to increase the amount of interest received on IOLTA accounts that is available for grants to pro bono service providers statewide. We've also worked with our sections to make access to justice a priority in every area of the bar's work.
- We've created three new SBN sections: litigation, appellate law and animal law. With all of our sections we have explored opportunities to engage section members via projects such as amicus briefs, legislative activities, CLE programming, publications, meetings and other activities to satisfy their obligation to section members to improve the practice of law in Nevada.
- We've created, with the exceptional leadership of U.S. District Court Judge Phil Pro and amazing support from Kathleen Dickinson, a Law Related Education Consortium, which consists of all of LRE providers in the state, to increase the awareness of LRE programs available statewide and assist them in carrying out their respective missions.
- Bar Counsel has been working to improve the efficiency of intake procedures by consistently assessing grievances, providing training to our discipline panels and adding a new attorney in Reno to address issues with loan modifications.
- To compliment *Nevada Lawyer*, we recently began communicating with our members via Facebook.
- With the amazing leadership from Eighth Judicial District Court Judge Nancy Allf, we created the SOLACE program. The sole purpose of the program is to allow the legal community to reach out in meaningful and compassionate ways to judges, lawyers, court personnel, paralegals, legal secretaries and their families who experience deaths or other catastrophic illnesses, sickness or injury.

Rather than letting events dictate its fate, the SBN is taking positive steps to invent its future. At the end of this month Frank Flaherty of Carson City will take the reins as president. He has been working hard to prepare and will do a great job! We have a talented and creative BOG that is working hard to face down the challenges, exploit the opportunities they present and take SBN into the future. Last but not least, we have a hardworking and competent Executive Director Kim Farmer, who along with her excellent staff, carry out the state bar's mission and the vision of the president and Board of Governors. Thanks for allowing me to serve. It has been an honor and a privilege. ■