

President's Corner, September 2015

By Joshua D. Huckaby

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To celebrate the new bar year, we will also be hosting a "Fall Social Mixer and Membership Drive" that will be held later this fall. Details, including date and time will follow, and we hope to see both members and prospective members there.

We will also be continuing our efforts with the Assisting Practitioners Program, which was initiated as a pilot program last year to welcome new lawyers to the State of Georgia. Our bar association co-sponsored this program with the State Bar of Georgia, and we will again be seeking mentors to welcome new lawyers to the Gwinnett legal community. If you are interested in mentoring a new attorney, you can contact either myself or Michelle West, Director of the Transitioning Into Law Program, who we are hoping to confirm as the guest speaker at our upcoming luncheon in November.

In addition, we will be celebrating our annual Law Enforcement Appreciation Picnic at Rhodes Jordan Park in Lawrenceville on Saturday, October 17, 2015. As many of you are aware, each year the Gwinnett County Bar Association, in conjunction with the Gwinnett Chiefs Association, sponsors this wonderful event, which is well-attended by officers and their families and provides a great way to honor those individuals who have committed their lives to protecting and serving others. On a related note, I want to recognize both Julie Potts and Mihae Park for their tireless efforts in making this event such a success year after year. They have once again volunteered their time this year, so when you see them, please thank them for all they do and for their continued service to our organization.

We have an incredible slate of officers this year, starting with our President Elect, Chuck Efstration, who, in addition to managing his law firm practice, currently serves Dacula, Lawrenceville, and the Hamilton Mill communities in the Georgia House of Representatives. Carlton Rouse, our Vice-President, has previously served admirably in both capacities as Secretary and Law Day Chair, helping us take home the State Bar Law Day Award of Achievement. Jon Setzer, our Treasurer, has been nominated for a State Court judgeship, and has previously served as the chairperson of the Georgia High School Mock Trial Committee and currently serves on the Mock Trial State Finals Planning Board, Law Academy Faculty, and Problem Subcommittee. Donald Lee, our Secretary, has likewise been nominated for a State Court judgeship, currently serves as a Staff Attorney for the Gwinnett County Juvenile Court's Guardian ad litem unit. Dodie Sachs will be serving as this year's Law Day Chair and was recently honored with the 2014 Atlanta Legal Aid Volunteer of the Year Award and the 2015 Pro Bono Project Award from the Gwinnett County Bar Association and the Gwinnett Pro Bono Project.

I would be remiss if I failed to point out the continued contributions of certain individuals who have devoted countless hours of time, energy, and leadership, which is so imperative to the success of our organization. Judge Warren Davis and Margaret Washburn have been front and center in helping write, obtain, and publish the content for our award-winning newsletter for years. In an effort to alleviate some of the responsibilities that have, by default, fallen on both, we are excited to introduce Elizabeth Harris, who was hired to help organize, collate and publish

the newsletter, along with giving it a new look. Megan Matteucci has also agreed to assist us in submitting articles and other content for the newsletter, for which I am extremely grateful. I also want to give a special thanks to both immediate Past President Joe Zdrilich and Past President Chuck Ross for their time, their continued contributions as we transition into a new year, and their assistance in updating our website, which, I'm excited to finally say, is fully operational.

As always, please know that this is your bar association, and our success depends upon your voice, your ideas, your feedback, and most importantly, your participation. I welcome you to write me at jhuckaby@oslawllc.com or to call me with ideas or concerns. I encourage you to also reach out to others who may not know about our bar association, whether or not they are new to the area, as I want this to be a year where our membership grows not only in numbers, but also in the impact it makes both within the Gwinnett legal community and beyond.