

American Board of Trial Advocates™



Washington Chapter Newsletter February 2023

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Members,

The very first thing I would like to do as your President in 2023 is to thank our outgoing President, Ketia Wick. Ketia did an amazing job, she was a great leader and ambassador for our chapter. She will be known in our history books for starting our monthly President's Message and Judges Tips. I pledged to keep it going so that both become institutionalized, such that every President that follows will keep it going. Her messages were always so well received and I can speak for myself, I looked forward to the judges tips each month.

The second order of business is to thank our outgoing Executive Committee for 2022 and welcome our 2023 Officers:

Eron Cannon, President Elect
Thomas Vertetis, Vice President
David Corey, Treasurer
Shellie McGaughey, Secretary

Finally our goals for 2023 are simple:

We will put an emphasis on growth and engagement. I plan to appoint a Task Force to assist in our growth in areas outside of King, Pierce and Snohomish Counties.

- Greater involvement on the national level.
- Raise our % of contributions to the National ABOTA Foundation.
- Continue our Spring Event and our Annual MIT.

Finally, I would like to extend a special thanks to Roy Umlauf, our Chapter President in 2021. Despite finishing his term, Roy has remained involved and his leadership has been invaluable. He has graciously taken on the responsibility of assisting with our contribution to the ABOTA Foundation.

2023 DUES PAYMENT DUE 3/31/23

You should have already received your 2023 dues statements from the National office. The deadline to pay dues is 3/31/23. This is earlier than in past years, so please be sure to get your dues in before that date. Members who have not paid by the deadline will have their membership suspended and will not be eligible to participate or vote in ABOTA meetings.

Your dues help support all of ABOTA's programs and initiatives. \$315 of your dues payment comes back to the Washington Chapter to help fund our local efforts.

If you have not yet paid your dues, you can view your statement and make a payment online at www.abota.org, or contact Nicole at abotawashington@gmail.com for an email copy of your statement.

FREE CLE

The ABOTA Foundation is holding a free virtual CLE on February 21, 2023 from 1:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M. Central

Ethical Considerations and Best Practices of Virtual Litigation

This conference will assist attendees in planning for ethical, professional and top-notch performance in all virtual litigation settings and in overcoming challenges when they arise.

Presenters:

Bryan Reid, San Bernardino/Riverside Chapter of ABOTA
Bill Shapiro, San Bernardino/Riverside Chapter of ABOTA
Jill Webb, Illinois Chapter of ABOTA

Register at

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_kidPH0UNTEKpRtd6FdNr3A

CIVIL TRIAL TIP OF THE MONTH



This month's tip is from Second District Court of Appeals **Judge Nelly Khouzam**.

Judge Nelly N. Khouzam received her B.A. degree in history from the University of Florida in 1979. She received her Juris Doctorate degree from the University of Florida College of Law, with honors, in December 1981. Following law school, Judge Khouzam served as a law clerk to the Honorable Jack R. Schoonover of the Second District Court of Appeal. After completion of her clerkship, she entered private practice where she became a shareholder at Fowler, White, Gillen, Boggs, Villareal and Banker, P.A., and later a shareholder at Silberman and Khouzam, P.A. Prior to joining the Second District Court of Appeal, she served for fourteen years as a circuit court judge in the Sixth Judicial Circuit, which is comprised of Pinellas and Pasco counties. Judge Khouzam was appointed to the Second District Court of Appeals and began serving as a member of the court on August 1, 2008. She became Chief Judge in July 2019 and served with distinction leading the court during the turbulent times of the pandemic.

Judicial Tip: Defending the Independence of the Judiciary

Public trust and confidence in the independence of the judiciary is paramount and vital in a free democratic society. An independent judiciary safeguards individual rights and liberties and preserves the rule of law. Regrettably, in recent years there has been a tremendous increase in attacks and attempts to assert political influence on our courts, which have the effect of undermining public trust and confidence. These efforts come from politicians, political parties, and special interest groups with a political agenda.

Frequently, these attacks amount to efforts at intimidation and retaliation. Some elected officials engage in personal attacks on judges because they disagree with their analysis of our laws. By doing so, they undermine the rule of law, threaten the independence of the judiciary, and interfere with the fair and impartial administration of justice.

Judges are governed by the rule of law, not partisanship ideologies or special interests. Because fair and impartial courts are accountable to the Constitution and laws—not to politicians, ideologies, or special interests—it is imperative that we vigorously preserve and defend our independent judiciary.

To that end, ABOTA has prepared a white paper addressing these crucial and timely issues. It reminds the public of the history and tradition of having an impartial court free from any influence, identifies some of the current challenges facing the courts, and provides solutions in an effort to preserve a fair and impartial judiciary. We hope that after reviewing the white paper, the public will be more engaged in the dialogue in order to improve trust and confidence in the independence of the judiciary.

[Judicial Independence Whitepaper](#)

ABOTA LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE & NATIONAL BOARD MEETING

The Washington Chapter had a strong contingent at the 2023 Leadership Conference and National Board Meeting in Santa Barbara January 26-28th. Chapter leaders participated in a variety of meetings and idea-sharing sessions with chapter leaders from around the country. We have some exciting new initiatives planned for this year and we look forward to another strong year.

In addition to being President of the Washington Chapter, J.D. Smith was also sworn in to his role as ABOTA Foundation Secretary.



ABOTA - CIVIC LEARNING COUNCIL

CLC-ABOTA Civic Education Grants

ABOTA continues to fund a grant program through the Washington Civic Learning Council (CLC). The CLC is a 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to address gaps in, and provide resources and support for, K-12 schools and youth development programs involved in civic development and education.

Recent Grants:

\$700 to attend the Sphere Summit: The Foundations Civics Culture through the Cato Institute in Washington, D.C.

\$1,500 to the Walla Walla YMCA for youth to attend the Youth and Government program in Olympia, WA.

\$1,600 to Morton High School for students to attend a Mock Trial competition.

\$2,500 to Lochburn Middle School for 8th graders to attend the Youth and Government program in Olympia, WA.