

Leading our Legal Community into a New Year

When Amanda Main asked me to join the LBA Board several years ago, I had no idea what an opportunity she was presenting to me. I remember vividly how I felt when I left my first board meeting. I was excited to be in the same room as so many other lawyers who had made it a priority to invest in the organization, and I was eager to learn about aspects of the profession that I don't encounter regularly as a business litigator. The word that kept coming to my mind was "community." It's fitting, then, that community is at the heart of the LBA's new logo tagline unveiled last month: Law. Community. Education.

As we begin this new year, I'd like to reflect on ways that we can strengthen our local legal community together. An important step in that process is making sure that everyone feels supported and has space for his, her or their voice. An inclusive community requires intentional steps to identify and remove barriers to participation, and the LBA is committed to continuing that important work so that members from all walks of the profession are comfortable and feel like they belong.

Another important step in nurturing community is ensuring that our members feel that the LBA is a worthy and productive place for them to devote time and resources. The answer – the "why" – will look different for a young lawyer searching for mentorship and high-quality skills-based continuing legal education than it does for a seasoned solo practitioner who may look to the LBA for the camaraderie and professional development that come from serving on committees or in the LBA's various sections. An authentic and rich community doesn't just happen, and we should never take it for granted. Thankfully, the LBA has a great tradition of its members showing up, putting in hard work and caring for each other. But if you're searching for your "why," I hope you'll be willing to reach out because the LBA is always interested in conversation about how members will feel engaged and supported. If you haven't been around lately – for whatever reason – now is a great time to jump back in.

At the core of our community is our strong and visionary Executive Director Kristen Miller and the talented staff of the LBA. These hardworking and dedicated folks are there to help. I'm also thankful for the vision, energy and fortitude of the recent past presidents with whom I've had the fortune of serving on the Executive Committee. Seth Gladstein, Deena Ombrés, Peter Wayne and Gerry Toner have each made invaluable contributions to the organization, including most recently shepherding it through the challenges of the COVID pandemic, the change in executive director leadership, the rebranding of our logo and Bar Center renovation planning. We have a terrific Executive Committee on deck in Bryan Armstrong, Maria Fernandez and Sam Wardle and I'm grateful to each of them for their dedication.

I am so honored to ring in 2023 as your LBA President. I am excited to learn and celebrate with you at events throughout the year, and I look forward to hearing from you about how we can continue the important work of building a Bar Association that is a welcoming community for all of us.



Kate Lacy Crosby
LBA President



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Introducing the 2022 Executive Committee



Bryan R. Armstrong

Assuming the role of president-elect is Bryan Armstrong, a solo practitioner who represents plaintiffs in personal injury, professional liability, and commercial and general civil cases. He began his legal career

as a litigator defending medical negligence claims and later worked as an Assistant Jefferson County Attorney. He opened his solo practice in 2011.

A past chair of the LBA's Solo & Small Firm Section and a Louisville Bar Foundation Fellow, Bryan serves as chair of the campaign giving committee of the David L. Armstrong Expansion Project for Jefferson Memorial Forrest. He received his J.D. from the University of Louisville Brandeis School of Law in 2007. ■



Maria A. Fernandez

Moving up to vice-president/treasurer is Maria A. Fernandez, a partner at Fernandez Haynes & Moloney. Maria works with clients across the United States and abroad. Her practice is focused in several areas including estate planning, probate and administration, elder law and special needs planning, corporate, individual

and international taxation, and corporate law, with an emphasis in closely held corporations.

She has served previously as a delegate from the Louisville Bar Association to the Board of Governors of the American Bar Association and a co-chair of the LBA's Diversity & Inclusion Committee. Maria serves on the Board of Directors of the Legal Aid Society and is also a Board Member and Treasurer of the Louisville Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. She received her J.D. from the University of Louisville Brandeis School of Law in 1989. ■



Samuel W. Wardle

Joining the Executive Committee as secretary is Samuel Wardle. Sam is a litigator at Frost Brown Todd who primarily focuses on complex insurance-coverage disputes between policyholders and insurers. His work in this area includes everything from "occurrence" disputes and Kentucky uninsured and under-

insured motorist coverage exclusions to personal property valuation litigation and insurer liability for broker negligence.

Sam received a degree in journalism from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and started his career as a reporter. He also taught English as a second language in China and worked as a wilderness instructor in Canada prior to enrolling and graduating, *summa cum laude*, from the University of Miami School of Law in 2013.

Sam is a past chair of the LBA's Litigation Section, for which he received the "Section of the Year" award. He also devotes a significant portion of his time to pro bono work and volunteerism. ■