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2020 OCCDL

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Dear Members and Friends of the Orange County Coalition for Diversity in the Law,

2020 has been a challenging year, but also a year of growth and opportunities to look at and do things a little differently. We appreciate your partnership in meeting these challenges and wanted to relay our sincerest appreciation for your continued support and involvement in our organization. The events and various external responses of this year have surely pushed us, as OCCDL, an organization committed to achieving true diversity in the legal community here in Orange County, and in our individual and member representative capacities to new and sometimes emotional or confusing places. Through it all, we stand together, not just with you and each of our individual members, but with our brother and sister organizations, in support of other non-profit organizations, and to help lighten the path of local law school students and next generation lawyers.

By flexing with you to our changed circumstances, we have been able to extend our outreach in the community, partner with OC and LA-area schools and organizations to increase community involvement and provide diversity-focused educational offerings (CLE credits) to students and practitioners. We appreciate the enthusiasm and ideas of so many of our members that has allowed us to develop and produce new topical content. Indeed, as a result of our member collaboration, we were able to expand and diversify our events and programming over the past year, including:

- Continuing OCCDL’s 2020 Social Justice Impact Litigation speaker series:
  - January talk on *A Campaign to End Religious Discrimination in the Military* by Amandeep Sidhu about the Sikh Coalition’s advocacy for service members to wear their articles of faith during active duty.
    - Thank you to member firm McDermott Will & Emery for hosting, lunch, and CLE credit.
  - February evening panel discussion on *Regulation over Education - Systemic Racial Issues and Inequalities in Our School Systems* by Jesselyn Friley of Public Counsel Opportunity Under Law, John Gibson, and moderated by TMBA President-elect Rebekah Thomas on special education law and their advocacy in helping children and families.
    - Thank you to co-sponsor Thurgood Marshall Bar Association, and member firm Crowell & Moring for hosting the cocktail reception and networking, CLE credit, and facilitating dial-in participation.
  - March screening of “*Alternative Facts: The Lies of Executive Order 9066*” and panel discussion by Don Tamaki, attorney for Fred Korematsu in his *coram nobis* appeal of *Korematsu v. U.S.*, Hoyt Zia, Founding President of the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA), Michael Matsuda, Superintendent of Anaheim Union High School District, and Kathay Feng, National Redistricting Director of Common Cause.
    - Thank you to member Chapman University, Fowler School of Law and ACS, BLSA, and Outlaw student organizations for hosting and providing livestreaming of the event, and to co-sponsors Stop Repeating History, OCAABA, Asian Americans in Action, JABA, and the Henri and Tomoyo Takahashi Charitable Foundation.

- October virtual presentation of *Law, Policy, and Myth regarding Migration at our Southern Border* by ACLU Sr. Staff Attorney Bardis Vakili.
- Organizing OCCDL's first mentoring program with law students across all Southern California law schools, including UCLA, USC, UCI, Loyola Law School, Chapman University Fowler School of Law, Pepperdine University, Western State School of Law, and Southwestern University. We were able to pair over 50 students with diverse lawyer mentors in Orange County.
- Coordinating and sharing "Diversity Stories" videos created by seven member firms describing what their Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) ideals and initiatives have been, even through the pandemic, to provide tools and insight to other firms and organizations working to enhance their own DEI programs. These videos are still available to view on our LinkedIn page and on our website! Thank you to Haynes & Boone, Rutan & Tucker, Orrick Herrington & Sutcliffe, McDermott Will & Emery, Everett Dorey, and O'Melveny & Myers for your participation, and also to your representatives who shared your stories!
  - *If you are interested in sharing a diversity story, please email Krystal ([krystal.anderson@orrick.com](mailto:krystal.anderson@orrick.com)).*
- Presenting to diverse law students across Southern California: "Start Your Career in Orange County! – An Introduction to the OC Legal Market."
  - Parker + Lynch Legal attorney recruiter Christina Ahn gave law students an introduction into the Orange County legal market and other advantages to starting their career in Orange County, valuable information about how COVID-19 has affected legal hiring and recruiting in Orange County, and about how to prepare for virtual hiring, specifically OCI. Christina also gave the law students a preview of the affinity bar organizations in Orange County.
  - Over 20 law students from over six Southern California law schools attended and at the conclusion of the presentation, we had a lively Q&A session with the students regarding specific topics and questions we wanted to cover. We hope to repeat this event in the future and potentially expand to law schools outside the Southern California region.
- Building on the popularity of yeast and bread starters, curating "Media Starters," of books, videos, podcasts, and other resources too good not to share. Our latest media starter recognized [Native American / National American Indian Heritage Month](#), and our [Hispanic & Latinx](#), [Commemorating Pride 50](#), [Anti-Racism](#) and [Asian Pacific American Heritage Month](#) media starters also remain available on our website (under Resources).
  - *Please help us celebrate our diverse communities year-round and suggest new topics and content!*
- Publishing bi-weekly Diversity newsletters to spotlight and share upcoming events and happenings of members and affiliate organizations, including scholarship, fellowship, and employment postings, pro bono or volunteer opportunities, and articles of interest.
  - *Please email your submissions to [info@occdl.org](mailto:info@occdl.org) for inclusion.*
- Starting a series of coffee chats for students and attorneys to network and have honest conversations around legal practice and career development.

In the New Year, we look forward to:

- Offering member challenges to start 2021 in a mindful DEI spirit!
- Establishing a monthly Virtual Professional Development Series, focused on practicing particular lawyering skills, in which we plan to have partners and of counsel at local firms provide real-time critiques to attending associates and others who want the chance to work on their skills in an environment where they aren't being judged by their own employers.

- In January, we plan to kick off the series with a “Building Confidence in Public Speaking through Improv” event, hosted by a local comedian, improv coach, and TED talk speaker.
- In February, we plan to have an event focused on practicing arguing motions.
- Other events may include issue spotting in contracts, proofreading legal writing with strong attention to detail, and more! *Please email your requests for additional series events, or your interest in participating in or hosting one of these events, to Krystal ([krystal.anderson@orrick.com](mailto:krystal.anderson@orrick.com)).*
- Creating a “Top 40 Young Diverse Lawyers in OC” and a “Top 10 Organizations for DEI In OC” program to recognize organizations and attorneys for their commitment to diversity through awards.
- Continuing the Social Justice Impact Litigation speaker series virtually in 2021, with speakers related to immigration, LGBTQ rights and transgender legislation, homelessness, healthcare, voting rights, etc.
  - *Please submit ideas/topics for our 2021 slate to Jiaxiao ([jjazhang@mwe.com](mailto:jjazhang@mwe.com)).*
- Scheduling more member-hosted coffee chats to connect and share individual insights and advice.
- Creating more Media Starters, and coordinating monthly Media Club sessions, to discuss relevant podcasts, movies, books, and more!
- Organizing a panel of Orange County-based public interest organizations to present to law students about public interest job opportunities in Orange County. We will be partnering with the Epstein Program at UCLA and UCI Law Public Interest Office, to provide students an opportunity to hear from organizations who are hiring for the summer. The program will be offered to coincide with the So Cal Public Interest Career Day (PICD), which is held in the spring semester.
- Networking with SCCLA, APABA, APAWLA, and VABASC in February while sampling artisanal tea and truffles from APA women-owned businesses.
- Revamping our website, and Internet presence.
  - In the meantime, *please follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and other social media platforms, invite a friend, and share our content and events!*

We continue to adapt our programming to align with current events and topics of interest, and hope our events provide an opportunity for each of our members to gain something both personally and professionally. Your input and suggestions are invaluable to our organization, so please do not hesitate to contact any of us or your organization’s representative to share your ideas or feedback. We would love to collaborate and engage more with you and our members to accelerate OCCDL’s growth, success, and impact!

Please consider taking our survey at <https://forms.gle/NC37Ti1Hkt7hrQDt6>, to update your office’s contacts, provide constructive feedback, and help us understand your interests.

We are honored to serve as your Board, thank you for all your contributions over the past year, and look forward to another successful year together!



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