



The New Bar. That is what we hoped to be this year. As I reflect back on these past months, I am filled with a tremendous sense of pride at the giant leap forward we have taken at the SDCBA. Our beautiful new Bar Center at 401 has indeed been a breath of fresh air, ushering in a new start for San Diego's oldest and largest law-related organization. We stepped forward into the future, building upon the rock-solid foundation and history provided to us by past generations. Our state-of-the-art facility has helped us realize our vision of the Bar Association we want to be: Hub of the legal community. Advocate for issues impacting the profession. Clearinghouse for legal trends. And the simplest of things: a comfortable and inviting place to land during a busy day of law practice.

Today, we are able to stream our MCLE content anywhere to our members, bringing greater value to membership and also connecting lawyers to our Bar Center who might otherwise not be able to come downtown. We have a newly redesigned Online Directory, which provides our members with the ability to create enhanced profiles. We are the first Bar Association anywhere to launch its own Web Application, and now our SDCBA App is loaded onto smartphones and tablets county-wide.

While we enjoyed our new space and new advances, we remained mindful of the challenges facing our legal community. The Court Funding crisis was first and foremost on our minds, and we were dismayed at the painful and sustained cuts to our courts. But in great challenge we found great opportunity for partnership and advocacy. Through the efforts of our Court Funding Action Committee (CFAC) we published the first-ever report on the status of justice in San Diego. Our report illustrated the impact that the budget cuts have had on our justice system locally and how we are not able to provide the community with the access to our courts to the degree that meets our society's standard.

Throughout the year, I have been greeted warmly and positively by our membership and

by members of our bench. Your support and encouragement has only enhanced my sense of pride and commitment to my work. But I must emphasize that it is the amazing team behind me that deserves equal credit. I wish to thank my absolutely outstanding Executive Committee: Jon Williams, Richard Huver, Laura Miller and Marvin Mizell. These people are relentless in their commitment to SDCBA, and I am inspired and motivated by them to be my best every day. And I cannot express enough gratitude to my courageous, talented SDCBA Board: Nadia Bermudez, Tom Penfield, Sheryl Graf, Patrick Ojeil, Victor Torres, Stacie Patterson, Larry Campitiello, Jim Crosby, Ilona Antonyan, Ray Estolano, Bob Gaglione, Danielle Hickman, Heather Riley and New Lawyer Division Representative Negeen Mirraghabie.

Finally — if you really want to know who is responsible for pretty much anything that looks good or sounds good coming from the SDCBA — it is our amazing staff, led by the remarkable and tireless Ellen Miller-Sharp, Executive Director. Ellen has been an incredible source of energy and inspiration for me, and the membership should know that there is not a moment that goes by that Ellen is not thinking about what is best for the SDCBA and in what direction we should be moving to be the absolute finest Bar Association we can be.

On a personal note, I would like to thank another woman who has truly been a cornerstone of support and key to the success I have enjoyed — District Attorney Bonnie Dumanis. Thanks to Bonnie's support, I was able to make history as the county's first Latino bar president. I am grateful to her and to the rest of my hard-working colleagues at the DA's office, who have enabled me to perform my duties with comfort and confidence. One of those DA colleagues also happens to be my wonderful husband, Joe McLaughlin, who, despite having been in trial a record number of days this year, always made me feel supported and able to take on the challenge of leadership without worry. And to my little son Cisco: the joy you have brought me in the 20 months you have been on this earth has made it all possible, and all worth it. Thank You.

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