



What We **ACCOMPLISHED TOGETHER**

AS MY TERM AS YOUR PRESIDENT DRAWS TO A CLOSE, I am very proud of what we achieved together under less than ideal circumstances. Before I highlight some success stories, I want to thank everyone whose work made these accomplishments possible, including the members of the board of directors and my presidential task forces and workgroups. Thanks also to the staff for keeping State Bar operations going during the COVID-19 pandemic and keeping us within budget. Together, we made progress on issues important to Texas lawyers as they faced the year's unprecedented challenges.

Task Force on Criminal Court Proceedings

The recommendations of my Presidential Task Force on Criminal Court Proceedings were highly successful in easing our courts back to safe and secure in-person proceedings, particularly jury trials. The task force's recommendations were very well received by the Texas Supreme Court and the Office of Court Administration and greatly informed the OCA's recommendations to the court.

Workgroup on Texas Lawyer Needs

In April 2021, I formed a Workgroup on Texas Lawyer Needs Arising from the 2020 Pandemic and 2021 Winter Storm that surveyed members last month to identify areas where the State Bar can continue or expand efforts to help members consistent with the bar's statutory purposes. The workgroup is working to assemble disaster-relief and CLE resources and will have more to report soon.

Grievance Task Force

My Task Force on Public Protection, Grievance Review, and the Client Security Fund has been working hard for months to ensure the lawyer grievance system remains effective and fair to all parties. The task force will present its recommendations to the State Bar board on June 16. You can watch the board meeting starting at 9 a.m. CDT at youtube.com/statebaroftexas.

Courthouse Access Badge Workgroup

In 2018, the State Bar board created a Courthouse Access Badge Task Force to study the implementation of courthouse access badges in Texas. The Courthouse Access Badge Workgroup I created in September 2020 continued those efforts this year but again fell short. This remains a priority to me and many other Texas lawyers.

Together We Dine

Near the start of my term, I set the ambitious goal of inviting every Texas lawyer to participate in the Together We Dine initiative. A project of Dallas-based Project Unity, Together We Dine brings people of various backgrounds together for non-confrontational discussions about racism for the purpose of fostering unity. I'm proud to say that we accomplished my goal: Every lawyer licensed in Texas received an invitation to attend a CLE-accredited, virtual Together We Dine event. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Thank you to everyone who participated and to the facilitators for making it happen.

Building Purchase

Another accomplishment is the recent purchase of the building and property at 1415 Lavaca Street in Austin, immediately west of and adjacent to the State Bar's headquarters at the Texas Law Center. The property will now undergo renovations to serve as meeting space for Texas lawyers and bar volunteers and additional office space for bar operations.

Ad Review Improvements

The State Bar is switching to an online submission process for the review of attorney advertisements, which should make getting approval easier and faster for lawyers.

New TLAP Position

And one of the most important accomplishments to me is the planned addition of another position in the Texas Lawyers' Assistance Program, a program that saves lives by providing help and hope to lawyers, judges, and law students struggling with substance use and other mental health issues.

Thank you for the honor of serving as your president. The trust you placed in me allowed us to accomplish the goals listed above, and it was an honor I shall never forget.

LARRY McDOUGAL

President, 2020-2021
State Bar of Texas