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## PRESIDENT'S PAGE

BY DANIEL M. KOTIN

### A Sudden Change in Message



n November 10, I had the honor of addressing a full auditorium of soon-to-be new Illinois lawyers at the Supreme Court Admission Ceremony at the Arie Crown Theater. Just a week earlier, we had honored the 103 lawyers who have been members of the Chicago Bar Association for 50 years. My plan had been to speak about leadership and juxtapose the new lawyers with the 50-year lawyers, as bookends of this profession.

But a few hours before I stepped to the podium that morning, the 2016 presidential election was decided. The election result compelled me to rethink my remarks and at least acknowledge the election, as it was certainly still in the forefront of everyone's mind.

I knew better than to offer any opinion regarding the outcome of the election. That's not the role of the CBA President, and, as in any free country, personal opinions as to who should lead will differ. On top of that, it is still much too early to know what impact this election will have upon our society, and in particular, on our legal system. There was, however,

one opinion I could offer because I was confident that everyone in the auditorium, in our nation, and in the world, would agree: this was the most *uncivil* presidential campaign that any of us have endured. If nothing else, these new lawyers should take a lesson from that.

As I looked out at the hundreds of mostly young faces, I could tell that civility was not at the top of anyone's list of concerns. They all had every intention of treating their fellow lawyers with dignity and respect. I recalled having felt the same way exactly 25 years earlier when I sat in that auditorium and was sworn in. I acknowledged this to this crowd but then reminded them of something that those of us with some experience know all too well. The practice of law sometimes can be hard. Representing clients can be contentious at times. And as we have all seen too often throughout the years, many of today's lawyers are willing to compromise civility in the name of advocacy. I implored the Class of 2016 not to do this.

The practice of law remains a noble profession. It is our privilege to serve as lawyers, not our right. We all learned early in law school that perhaps the most important tenet in our profession is "honesty." But not far behind that is "civility." I asked these candidates, from day one, to make a concerted effort to *always* treat other lawyers, judges, co-workers, clients, and opponents with courtesy and respect. They all deserve it. Our profession

With this in mind, my impressions from our annual luncheon a week earlier honoring the CBA's 50-year members became even more relevant. With each passing year, the size of our 50-year class grows

larger and larger. This year, we honored 103 members (101 men and 2 women) who have been part of our association for 50 years.

At the reception before lunch, I was amazed by the reunion-like atmosphere that was on display in the room. These lawyers, most in their mid to late 70s, had essentially grown up together in law. When they reunited at the luncheon, these lawyers displayed comradery and treated each other with admiration and respect. It truly was an example of our noble profession on display at its best.

Let us hope that this new class of lawyers can have similar reunions 50 years from now. Let us hope that these new lawyers look at the conduct in the 2016 presidential campaign as behavior they should reject, not embrace. And let those of us in the middle, practicing between zero and 50 years, strive to conduct ourselves in ways that the new lawyers of today and in the future can emulate with pride.

#### **Every Person Has A Voice**

Monday, January 23, 2017, 3:00-6:30 p.m.

Presented by: Young Lawyers Section

MCLE Credit: 2.75 IL MCLE Credit

This program will provide an in-depth look at issues, concerns and remedies aimed to address the exploitation of individuals through human trafficking both domestically and globally. Panelists and speakers will discuss what trafficking is, provide current research and trends concerning trafficking, and describe how ending demand is the key to preventing the further exploitation and abuse of individuals through sex trafficking.

A reception and book signing with Hon. Virginia M. Kendall will follow the seminar, where she will sign copies of her book, *Child Exploitation and Trafficking: Examining Global Enforcement and Supply Chain Challenges and U.S. Responses* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2016).

#### Participants include:

Donna Fishman, Illinois State Policy Advocacy Network Chair and the Co-Chair for the Jewish Coalition Against Sex Trafficking Chicago (JCAST); Kaethe Morris Hoffer, Executive Director, Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation (CAASE); Catherine Longkumer, Project Manager, Human Trafficking Initiative, Metropolitan Family Services Legal Aid Society; Professor Jody Raphael, Senior Research Fellow, Schiller DuCanto & Fleck Family Law Center, DePaul University College of Law; Det. Al Krok (ret.), Special Investigations Unit, Chicago Police Department; Professor Katherine Kaufka Walts, Director, Center for the Human Rights of Children, Loyola University Chicago; and Judge Virginia M. Kendall, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois.

