



OHIO ASSOCIATION OF CIVIL TRIAL ATTORNEYS
The Source for Defense Success

THE UPDATE

NEWS & PRACTICE POINTERS FROM OACTA

In This Issue

A Message from
Elizabeth Smith,
OACTA President

Upcoming OACTA
Events

16th Annual OACTA
Foundation Golf Outing

Lawyers Care -
OAJ/OACTA Day of
Service

OACTA Litigation and
Trial Skills Workshop

Leadership Spotlight -
Natalie Wais & David
Orlandini

Ohio Rule Changes

OACTA Award
Nominations

DRI Free Membership
Program

Recruit One Campaign
Winner

OACTA Committees

New OACTA Members

OACTA 2025 Annual
Meeting Speakers

**OACTA Board of
Trustees**

President's Message

**By: Elizabeth T. Smith
2025 OACTA President**



**To Serve Or Not to Serve, That is
the Question.
The Answer: To Serve**

It is always hard to believe that summer is almost over when the Fourth of July comes and goes. Our summers are becoming shorter and shorter. Courts don't slow down as they used to because of their busy dockets. Fall sports start practicing in August if you have children of almost any age. Organizations that may have taken a breather are busily planning your life for September and beyond. Christmas sales are beginning. The merry-go-round of life speeds up! Here's hoping you've had or will have some time to refresh and reflect.

While you may be tired of hearing this year's refrain of "**engagement**," reflection on the meaning of life is "**engagement**." And because we are lawyers, we probably schedule that time and set a deadline for reflection; we might even draft discovery requests to ourselves. Maybe it's not such a bad idea to ask ourselves during that reflection to ask what can we do to give back because we are fortunate to do what we do in the best example of democracy there is, even on the worst of court days. That brings me to the idea of service: it engages you and fulfills you in ways that you may feel are lacking in the daily grind.

Think Globally. Act Locally.

So along with the theme that September is coming... September is the month that DRI designates for having an international day of service. This September, the DRI Foundation and participating state, local and national defense organizations (SLDOs/NDOs) will host its fourth International Day of Service. Over 25 organizations participated in the event in 2024.

[READ MORE](#)

OACTA and Robson Forensic Happy Hours

Queen City Exchange
32 W. Court Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202
Thursday, July 31, 2025
[RSVP HERE](#)

Southern Tier Brewing Company
811 Prospect Ave E, Ste E, Cleveland, OH 44115
Thursday, August 28, 2025
[RSVP HERE](#)

Women in the Law After Work Wind-Downs

Columbus Museum of Art for BAM Thursdays
480 E. Broad Street, Columbus
Thursday, August 14, 2025
[RSVP HERE](#)

Ghost Baby in Over the Rhine
1314 Republic Street, Cincinnati
Thursday, August 14, 2025
[RSVP HERE](#)

OACTA Foundation 16th Annual Golf Outing

Pinnacle Golf Club
September 2, 2025
[Click Here to Register](#)

OACTA Annual Meeting
Renaissance Columbus Westerville-Polaris
November 13-14, 2025
Save the Date!

OACTA Foundation 16th Annual Golf Outing

September 2, 2025
Pinnacle Golf Club
1500 Pinnacle Club Dr. | Grove City, OH 43123



Since 2009, OACTA has conducted an annual golf outing! Net proceeds from the OACTA Golf Outing benefit the OACTA Foundation. The OACTA Golf Outing is held at Pinnacle Golf Club in early September, annually. OACTA members, friends, and colleagues gather for golf and fun, and all for a good cause! OACTA offers many skill prizes such as, closest to the pin, longest drive, longest putt, and the hole-in-one competition! Men's, Women's and Mixed Teams have opportunities to win first place in their division! Raffle prize drawings provide great prizes and lots of fun!

[Learn More and Register Today!](#)

Lawyers Care - OAJ/OACTA Day of Service

OACTA is collaborating with OAJ to give back to the community!

Friday, September 12th
12:00-3:00 p.m.
Mid-Ohio Market
620 Norton Rd | Columbus, OH 43228

OACTA members are encouraged to sign up to volunteer at the Mid-Ohio Market for a day of giving back.



Litigation and Trial Skills Workshop

The 2025 Litigation and Trial Skills Workshop was held at the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association in Cleveland, Ohio on Friday, July 18, 2025. Thank you to all who participated!



Leadership Spotlight - Natalie Wais & David Orlandini

Our committees are the backbone of OACTA, and the leaders of those committees are driving forces. OACTA's Officers and Board of Trustees decided to recognize our leaders in the Update. We are proud to spotlight Attorneys **Natalie Wais** and **David Orlandini**.

Natalie Wais is a Past President of OACTA, a former Young Lawyer Committee Co-Chair, former Trial Tactics Committee Co-Chair, and is now finishing her three-year term as the DRI State Representative for Ohio.

Natalie sums up her experience with OACTA and the many benefits she realized:

"OACTA has been instrumental in my professional development and has helped me expand my network of other lawyers (both statewide and nationally through DRI), expert witnesses, and even clients. I have met people across the state and country, that I reach out to with questions about venues/judges/attorneys in their regions, issues that are novel to me, and potential expert witnesses. My OACTA membership has also benefitted my practice, as I have been referred business through both my OACTA and DRI contacts. Through the various roles I have held, I have developed leadership and management skills that carryover at my firm."



When I first started practicing law, my managing partner and mentor told me I needed to join OACTA. He said I needed to attend some of the CLEs. I remember furiously scribbling notes at my first personal injury defense CLE, absorbing everything I could. After a year or so, I mentioned that I was interested in getting more involved. The next thing I knew, I was a Co-Chair of a committee. I served as the Young Lawyer Committee Co-Chair from 2012-2015, as the Trial Tactics Committee Co-Chair from 2015-2017, on the Board of Trustees from 2012-2025, and as an officer from 2017-2022, and I am now finishing my three-year term as the DRI State Representative for Ohio. I turned 40 while I was serving as President of OACTA. I share all this not to give you my biography, but to demonstrate how quickly a young lawyer can gain leadership experience and move from co-chair of a committee to a leadership position of an amazing statewide organization to a leadership position on a national level. OACTA is an organization in which the more you put into, the more you get out of it.

I have the utmost respect for so many members of this organization and am thankful for the friendships I have developed with professionals that I may have never encountered in my practice. After being on the OACTA Board of Trustees for approximately 13 years and the DRI State Representative for 3 years, I look forward to my next chapter with OACTA. And I look forward to seeing new and familiar faces at the future CLEs and social events."

Natalie is a shareholder and the current President of Young & Alexander Co., LPA. Her practice areas primarily include insurance defense, personal injury defense, and civil litigation.

David Orlandini is a Past President of OACTA, former Golf Outing Chair, and currently co-chairs the OACTA Litigation and Trial Skills Committee. David will begin to serve in the role of DRI State Representative for Ohio in October. David has the following message to all OACTA Members:

"Active participation in OACTA committees offers an excellent opportunity to develop leadership skills and build a valuable network with fellow defense attorneys across Ohio. After joining OACTA, I volunteered to chair the Annual Golf Outing. This allowed me to connect with many members socially, marking the beginning of my deeper involvement. Over several years, I transitioned from running the Golf Outing to an Officer role, eventually serving as President. My sustained engagement with OACTA has been the most rewarding and beneficial professional development of my career. I've grown significantly as a leader and built an invaluable professional network. I strongly encourage all OACTA members to actively participate in a committee, attend a seminar, join a happy hour, or engage with other members. The rewards are truly worth your time."



David is Counsel with Collins, Roche, Utley & Garner, LLC, in its Columbus office. There, he represents clients in almost every state court in Ohio and in arbitrations before the American Arbitration Association. Dave's practice is as defense counsel for insurance companies, their insureds, manufacturers, trucking companies, railroads, utility companies, landlords, small business owners, general contractors and subcontractors in such trades as plumbing, HVAC, masonry, concrete, roofing, electrical, excavation, paving, framing, and geothermal.

Calling all OACTA Members!

If you have been practicing for more than five years and summered at a firm/government office during law school, we want to hear from you! Share what you did your last summer with the OACTA Mentorship Committee, for the benefit of our new and young lawyers! If you are interested, please contact Karen Ross at karen.ross@tuckerellis.com to share your insight. It's a limited time commitment (5 minutes or less) and big reward (help guide OACTA's newer lawyers).

Ohio Rule Changes

Ohio Rule Changes 2026

by James L. McCrystal, Jr., Sutter O'Connell Co.

None of the rule changes which took effect July 1, 2025, to the Appellate, Civil and Evidence Rules affect the typical case load of OACTA members. A copy of the 2025 version of all the practice rules can be found here at Ohio Rules of Court on the Supreme Court's website.

However, each of these rules did contain an amendment to the final rule in each of these sets of rules addressing the effective date of amendments. Since 1970 each time a rule change occurred a new paragraph to that "Effective Date" rule was added noting which rules were amended. All of those paragraphs have been removed from the rules.

[READ MORE](#)

OACTA Award Nominations

Consider nominating a colleague for an OACTA Award!

OACTA welcomes members to submit nominations for any of the following OACTA awards:

- Excellence in Advocacy Award
- Respected Advocate Award
- Outstanding Advocacy Award
- Outstanding Young Lawyer Award
- Public Service Award
- Distinguished Contributions to the Profession Award

Nominations are to include a completed [Nomination Form](#) and written description of why you believe this candidate should be considered for the award.

View the [award descriptions and list of past recipients](#) or visit www.oacta.org for more information.

Nominations are due to the OACTA office by August 1st.

Awards are presented at the OACTA Annual Meeting in November at the Renaissance Columbus Westerville-Polaris.

DRI Free Membership Program for OACTA Members

DRI is currently offering a free year of membership to new members and those whose membership lapsed more than five years ago. This limited time program runs through September 30, 2025.

[LEARN MORE](#)

OACTA Recruit 1 Campaign Winners Announced!

We are excited to announce the OACTA RECRUIT ONE CAMPAIGN Winners!

RECRUIT 1

Congratulations to OACTA member Dan Winkler who won a \$500 Amazon Gift card, compliments of Ohio Reporting Company.

New Member Zachary Kurzhals won a complimentary registration to the 2025 OACTA Annual Meeting.

Thank you to all of our participating members for recruiting new members!

Learn More About OACTA Committees

Click on the names of the committees below to download their current roster as an excel spreadsheet.

OACTA Substantive Law Committees:

- [Appellate Advocacy](#)
- [Business & Commercial Litigation](#)
- [Construction Litigation](#)
- [Employment Law](#)
- [Government Liability](#)
- [Insurance Coverage](#)
- [Litigation & Trial Skills](#)
- [Medical Negligence](#)
- [Personal Injury](#)

- [Product Liability & Toxic Tort](#)
- [Professional Liability](#)

[Click Here to Update your Committee Interest](#)

New OACTA Members since April 2025

Please welcome our new OACTA members!

Angelina Gingo Sutter O'Connell
Zachary Kurzhals Cincinnati Insurance
DeAngelo LaVette Sutter O'Connell
Abigail Magorien Curry Roby, LLC
Daniel Matusicky Kohrman Jackson & Krantz
Sarah Renaker Bonezzi Switzer Polito & Perry
Meaghan Schneider Rendigs Fry Kiely & Dennis LLP
Cecelia Smith POLING
Oliver Wilhite Gatlin Voelker

Call for Speakers for the 2025 OACTA Annual Meeting!

The OACTA Annual Meeting Planning Committee is making plans for this year's Annual Meeting to be held November 13-14 at the Renaissance Columbus Westerville-Polaris. They need your ideas and input!

What topics do you want to learn more about? Please send your suggestions to OACTA@AssnOffices.com.

If you would like to speak at the Annual Meeting, please submit your name, topic or presentation title, and brief description of the presentation to OACTA@AssnOffices.com.

With your help, the 2025 OACTA Annual Meeting will offer topics of interest and provide value to our members!

Save the date and plan to attend!

Thank you to the OACTA Annual Sponsors for their Support



**RUDICK FORENSIC
ENGINEERING**
Building Consultants

THE EXPERTS
**Robson
Forensic**

CSBA
COURT SURETY BOND AGENCY
Appeal Bond Specialist

RIMKUS



Know.

OACTA requests that authors who republish articles that were originally published in an OACTA publication, reflect that the article first appeared in the OACTA publication.

OACTA | www.oacta.org



OACTA | 400 W. Wilson Bridge Road Suite 120 | Worthington, OH 43085 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!