



OHIO ASSOCIATION OF CIVIL TRIAL ATTORNEYS
The Source for Defense Success

THE UPDATE

NEWS & PRACTICE POINTERS FROM OACTA

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President's Message

By: Daniel Richards
2026 OACTA President



As we move through the summer months, OACTA continues to provide valuable opportunities for professional development, networking, and engagement within Ohio's civil defense bar. Kudos to our Young Lawyers Committee for doing a great job planning summer happy hours around the state. I had a great time at the Cleveland event, where I proved that I have no place on a golf course...even an indoor miniature golf course. I was very pleased to see this event so well attended, especially by many of our younger members and potential members to be.

This edition of *The Update* highlights several upcoming programs and events that reflect our organization's ongoing commitment to serving our members and strengthening our profession. From our annual Foundation Golf Outing to educational webinars and coffee chats, there are many ways to connect with colleagues, exchange ideas, and support the important work of OACTA.

This issue also showcases the many ways our members contribute to the success of our organization. I encourage you to explore opportunities to become involved in one of our substantive law committees, nominate deserving colleagues for OACTA awards, and consider sharing your expertise as a speaker at one of our meetings. The strength of OACTA has always been rooted in the dedication and participation of its members.

[READ MORE](#)

Mark Your Calendar

OACTA Summer Happy Hour Series - Columbus

Thursday, August 13th

5pm - 7pm

Dueling Axes

309 S. 4th Street, Suite 1B

Columbus, OH 43215

[Register Here](#)

OACTA Foundation 17th Annual Golf Outing

August 31, 2026

Pinnacle Golf Club

1500 Pinnacle Club Dr.

Grove City, OH 43123

[Register Here](#)

OACTA Lunch and Learn Webinar

Wednesday, September 9, 2026

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

"New Trends in Court Reporting: Ethical &
Legal Use of Advanced Technology
and Artificial Intelligence"

Presented by Avi Stadler, Esq.

Sponsored by Esquire Deposition Solutions

[Register Here](#)

OACTA Coffee Chat

Friday, September 25, 2026

8:30 - 9:00 AM

"Insurance Bad Faith"

Presented by Greg O'Brien

[Register Here](#)

2026 OACTA Annual Meeting

December 3-4, 2026

409 Altair Pkwy

Westerville, OH 43082

[Save the Date!](#)

OACTA Foundation 17th Annual Golf Outing



August 31, 2026
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 annually at Pinnacle Golf Club. OACTA members, friends, and colleagues gather for golf and fun, 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!

[Register Here](#)

Golf Outing Schedule of Events

11:00 AM

Golfer Check-In Opens

Driving Range Opens

Grab-n-Go Box Lunch Available in Club House

12:00 PM

Shot-Gun Start

5-6:30 PM

Post Outing Dinner Reception

Pricing

Golfer Registration: \$165/golfer (\$175 after 8/17/26)

Reception Only Registration: \$50/non-golfer

[View the Sponsorship Opportunities \(PDF\)](#)

[Become a Golf Outing Sponsor!](#)

"New Trends in Court Reporting: Ethical & Legal Use of Advanced Technology and Artificial Intelligence"

with Avi Stadler, Esq.

September 9, 2026

12:00 – 1:00 p.m.

Two developments are reshaping modern litigation practice: the nationwide shortage of court reporters and the rapid integration of artificial intelligence into legal workflows. As courts, law firms, and clients increasingly adopt technology-enabled solutions, attorneys must understand both the practical and ethical implications of these changes. Digital reporting technologies are transforming how deposition testimony is captured and preserved, while artificial intelligence is creating new opportunities and new responsibilities for litigators throughout the discovery process.

This one-hour CLE covers:

- The impact of the nationwide court reporter shortage on deposition practice and the growing role of digital reporting technologies in testimony capture.
- Practical guidance on digital reporting, including how testimony is captured, preserved, and utilized in modern litigation.
- Current and emerging applications of artificial intelligence in litigation support, case preparation, and deposition practice.
- Ethical obligations, risks, and best practices associated with the use of artificial intelligence and other technology-driven legal solutions.
- Considerations for evaluating and implementing new technologies while maintaining professional competence and compliance with applicable rules and standards.

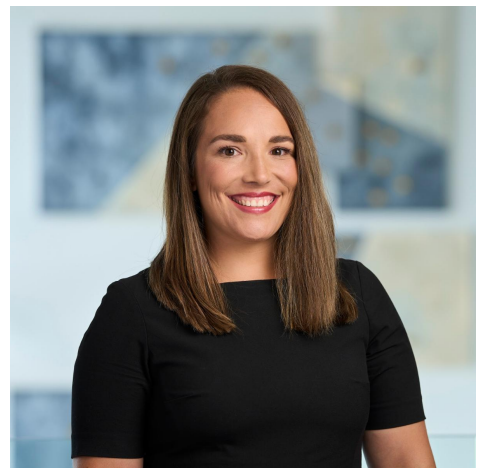
[Register Here](#)

Sponsored by Esquire Deposition Solutions

Leadership Spotlight

Elisabeth "Elisa" Arko is the well-deserving focus of this edition's Leadership Spotlight. One of OACTA's most active and engaged members, Elisa has contributed her time and talents through numerous leadership and service roles. Here, she reflects on her experience with OACTA and the professional relationships and opportunities that have made her involvement so rewarding:

"OACTA has been one of the most rewarding professional organizations I've been part of because it creates opportunities to learn, serve, and build meaningful relationships with attorneys across Ohio. As an appellate lawyer, I have the privilege of working



with trial lawyers at pivotal moments in their cases, and OACTA has expanded my professional network, created invaluable opportunities to grow my appellate practice and experience, and has helped shape my perspective on the practice of law.

What began with a mentorship opportunity along with attending CLEs has grown into leadership opportunities that have been incredibly fulfilling. Serving as Co-Chair of the Amicus Committee, Vice Chair of the Appellate Advocacy Committee, a prior Chair of the Annual Meeting, and now as a member of the Board of Trustees has allowed me to form relationships with members of the bar and work alongside talented lawyers who are deeply committed to strengthening Ohio's civil defense bar and improving our profession.

The greatest benefit of OACTA, though, has been the people. The relationships I've built through committee work and OACTA events have led to mentorship, collaboration, and friendships that continue to enrich my practice. For new members, OACTA offers countless opportunities to become involved, develop leadership skills, and build lasting professional relationships. The more engaged you become, the more rewarding the experience is."

About Elisabeth:

Elisabeth (Elisa) is a partner in the Appellate & Legal Issues Group at Tucker Ellis LLP. She focuses her practice on complex civil appeals and litigation strategy, representing clients in state and federal appellate courts throughout Ohio and across the country. She regularly partners with trial teams before, during, and after trial to preserve issues, develop appellate strategy, and handle appeals involving product liability, medical malpractice, constitutional litigation, class actions, and other complex civil matters.

House Bill 105 Signed into Law - New Ohio Litigation Finance Disclosure Law

Governor DeWine just signed into law Ohio HB 105 which, inter alia, requires commercial and consumer funders to register with the state and disclose funding agreements to the attorney general after cases resolve.

The bill also prohibits funders from influencing how lawsuits are handled or settled and from entering funding agreements with individuals or entities domiciled outside the US.

This apparently makes Ohio the second state to address the problem of third-party litigation funding, with North Carolina already having enacted a similar law.

You can find out more [HERE](#).

Michael M. Neltner, Esq., CPCU
Cincinnati Insurance Legal-Litigation
OACTA Vice President

Amicus Curiae

OACTA AMICUS WIN!

Steigerwald v. Berea, 2026-Ohio-2554

Congratulations to Frank Scialdone (counsel for appellants, the City of Berea) and Stephen Funk (counsel for OACTA) for the Ohio Supreme Court win in *Steigerwald v.*

In Steigerwald, the Ohio Supreme Court held that the City of Berea was entitled to political subdivision immunity under the Political Subdivision Tort Liability Act and that immunity was not changed because the extended legs on bench in a locker room did not constitute “physical defect” under R.C. 2744.02(B) (4).

[View the Ohio Supreme Court's Decision](#)

[Learn More about the Amicus Program and View the Amicus Database](#)

OACTA Awards 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 December at the Renaissance Columbus Westerville-Polaris.

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 2026

Please welcome our new OACTA members!

Baylee Faires, Mollica Gall Sloan & Sillery Co., LPA
Jordyn Miklinski, Roetzel & Andres
Sarah McHugh, Maloney McHugh & Kolodgy
Shelby Nathans, ALH Law Group

Call for Speakers for the 2026 OACTA Annual Meeting!

The OACTA Annual Meeting Planning Committee is making plans for this year's Annual Meeting to be held December 3-4 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 2026 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



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