

News & Practice Pointers from OACTA

Fall 2017

In This Issue

[President's Message](#)

[2017 OACTA Annual Meeting](#)

[OACTA Committee Meetings](#)

[Congratulations 2017 OACTA
Award Recipients](#)

[Case Victories Needed](#)

[Welcome to New OACTA
Members!](#)

[2017 OACTA 9th Annual Golf
Outing](#)

[2017 Appellate Advocacy
Seminar](#)

[OACTA Social Media
Opportunity](#)

[OACTA Website Upgrade](#)

[Donate to the OACTA
Foundation!](#)

[Member News](#)

[OACTA Board of Trustees](#)

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[Tony Brown](#)
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Upcoming Events

Mark your

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By: Brian D. Kerns
2017 OACTA President



The baseball playoffs and World Series are upon us (oh, my poor Indians L), we're already into football season (oh, my poor Browns...fans) and golf season is winding down. The kids are settled into the routine of school, the pumpkins are starting to appear on porches and the woods are beginning to light up with color. You know what that means, right? Fall is here.

And for OACTA, Fall is the time when we gather for our Annual Meeting—November 16 and 17—two days of great CLE Programming, networking and fun. This year our Annual Meeting will be held at the fabulous, new Hilton Cleveland Downtown. We will have presentations on many topics of interest, including a number of Ohio trial judges, a speaker on the science of persuasion, an overview of the Canadian Tort system, unique insights into large and catastrophic loss claims, insurance claims executives sharing the secrets of how to become and remain panel counsel for insurers, and many other interesting topics. Please check out our OACTA website for complete program information and registration details. I hope you'll join us and pick up a heaping helping of CLE credits for very low cost, and break bread and swap information with your fellow defense professionals from around the state.

The Annual Meeting is also the occasion for OACTA to elect a new Board of Trustees, and the current officers progress through the chairs. It's hard for me to believe that this event, less than a month away, will mark the end of my year as your President. What a pleasure and honor it has been to serve and promote the members of our organization, whom more than one judge has told me, are "the best trial lawyers" in the State.

Calendars!

**November 16th -
17th**

OACTA Annual Meeting
Hilton Cleveland
Downtown
Cleveland, OH

[Register Online](#)

[Download Registration](#)

[Brochure](#)

[More Information](#)

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**The Update Winter
Issue deadline is
December 1, 2017**

SUBMIT YOUR MEMBER NEWS

OACTA is always looking for
announcements
for the "Member News"
section of the Update. Please
submit your news via email to:


[Tony Brown](#)

or

[Ian Mitchell](#)

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Thanks to all of you who came out in September for the OACTA Golf Outing, which supports the National Foundation for Judicial Excellence (NFJE) as well as funds OACTA's Diversity Scholarships. We've had a great year to start moving into the next 50 years of our great organization. We revamped our website, enhanced our social media presence, and presented some terrific CLE programs and social events, not to mention our very active and successful Amicus Curiae program. One of the things I'm most proud of this year is the establishment of a Claims Advisory Committee, which has just made recommendations to the Board of Trustees that will hopefully lead to even deeper involvement and commitment to OACTA by members of the insurance industry, in-house lawyers and non-lawyer claims professionals alike. We expect this committee will become a standing committee, which will contribute ideas and collaborate in programming for years to come.

Mark your calendar now for November 16 and 17, and go now to our newly revamped website at www.oacta.org to register for this, the largest event of the year for OACTA and its members. I look forward to seeing you there.

2017 OACTA Annual Meeting

The **Hilton Cleveland Downtown** will be the site for this year's Annual Meeting on November 16 and 17! The Hilton is located in the heart of Cleveland's downtown area, right on Lake Erie. **Make your reservation by 11/1 to receive the group rate!**



Join us for valuable information from **nationally and locally recognized speakers and presentations** addressing scientific principles of trial persuasion, practical tips for trial attorneys, jury selection and legal ethics and professional responsibility. Hear from Insurance Claims Executives about how they select and monitor panel counsel, a Canadian attorney on basics of the Canadian Tort system, a panel of Ohio judges with practice tips, and international claims executives regarding handling large catastrophic claims.

This will be an exceptional CLE program and networking opportunity with **up to 8.75 hours of CLE, including 1.5 hours of attorney professional conduct instruction.** The **OACTA Annual Awards Luncheon and Business Meeting** will provide an opportunity to recognize your esteemed colleagues for their contributions!

This year, OACTA will hold a special **Social & Networking Event on Thursday evening at The Corner Alley!** Join your colleagues for what is sure to be lots of fun and entertainment!

**Register TODAY and plan now to attend this year's
OACTA Annual Meeting!**



Are you involved in an OACTA Committee?

OACTA Committees will meet from 8:15-9:00am on Friday, November 17th during the Annual Meeting. Plan to attend to learn more about OACTA Committees!

If you are not on a committee, please consider joining an OACTA Committee! It's a great way to establish and demonstrate your expertise in your primary practice area(s). And it's also a great way to meet and deepen relationships with your counterparts across the state, as well as your current---and potential future---clients. OACTA's Substantive Law Committees are called upon to play a larger role in the delivery of the association's key membership services, such as CLE programming, publishing, and web content development. Click [here](#) to update your committee involvement. Click [here](#) to learn how to access your committee communications.

Substantive Law Committees:

Alternative Dispute Resolution	Insurance Coverage
Appellate Advocacy	Medical Negligence
Business & Commercial Litigation	Personal Injury Defense
Construction Litigation	Product Liability
Employment Law	Professional Liability
Environmental Law/Toxic Tort	Trial Tactics
Governmental Liability	

Member Services Committees:

Diversity Committee	Young Lawyers Committee
Membership Committee	Golf Outing Committee
Women in the Law Committee	

Congratulations 2017 OACTA Award Recipients!

Excellence in Advocacy Award:

Lawrence A. Sutter, Esq. (posthumously)

Sutter & O'Connell, Cleveland, OH

Respected Advocate Award:

James (Jay) M. Kelley, III, Esq.

Elk & Elk, Mayfield Heights, OH

Outstanding Advocacy Award:

Timothy J. Fitzgerald, Esq.

Koehler Fitzgerald LLC, Cleveland, OH

Michael M. Neltner, Esq.

Staff Counsel for the Cincinnati Insurance Co., Cincinnati, OH

Outstanding Young Lawyer Award:

Melanie Irvin, Esq.

National Interstate Insurance Co., Richfield, OH

Public Service Award:

Judge Michael P. Donnelly

Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas

Distinguished Contributions to the Profession Award:

Terrance M. Miller, Esq.

Porter Wright, Columbus, OH

Frank Seth Hurd Member of the Year Award:

Anne Marie Sferra, Esq.

Bricker & Eckler, Columbus, OH

OACTA Committee Chair of the Year Award:

Michael M. Neltner, Esq.

Staff Counsel for the Cincinnati Insurance Co., Cincinnati, OH

Case Victories Needed!

OACTA members - send summaries of your significant case victories to David Oberly, OACTA Social Media & Website Chair, at djoberly@mdwecg.com for inclusion on OACTA's new "Significant Case Victories" webpage and announcements on social media. Those received will be posted on our [website](#).



Welcome to the following new OACTA Members since July!

Karen	Clouse	Bricker & Eckler
Chad	Eggspuehler	Tucker Ellis LLP
Preston	Garvin	Garvin & Hickey, LLC
Matthew	McIntyre	Nationwide Mutual Insurance Group
Robert	Mitchell	Ulmer & Berne LLP

2017 OACTA 9th Annual Golf Outing

The 2017 Golf Outing took place on September 5, 2017 at Pinnacle

Golf Club. Once again the best lawyers and the most generous sponsors in Ohio gathered not just for golf and fun, but they did so while raising money for the OACTA Foundation that contributes to the National Foundation for Judicial Excellence (NFJE) and the OACTA Diversity Scholarship.



[Thank you to our 2017 Golf Outing Sponsors!](#)

Please contact Chair David Orlandini if any OACTA Member is interested in helping serve on the Golf Committee for 2018. David can be reached at dorlandini@cruglaw.com.

2017 Appellate Advocacy Seminar

By: Daniel A. Richards

OACTA's Appellate Advocacy Seminar took place on August 25th at Grange Insurance. The program featured several presentations from esteemed members of the appellate bar and bench. The day started off with a round of short and targeted sessions to assist attorneys handling appeals in the areas of insurance coverage, medical negligence, employment law and governmental liability. These "legal speed dating" presentations were given by Mike Neltner (insurance coverage), Karen Clouse (medical negligence), Christine Snyder (employment law) and Stephen Funk (governmental liability). Next, Ben Sassé demonstrated key strategies for oral argument through a review and analysis of an actual argument in a landmark case that was argued to the Ohio Supreme Court. Justice Patrick Fischer rounded out the morning with an Ohio Supreme Court Justice's advice on how to gain a reputation as ethical and professional appellate counsel.

The afternoon started with a panel discussion of appellate judges in which Justice Patrick DeWine (Ohio Supreme Court), Jude Lisa

Sadler (10th District Court of Appeals) and Judge Tim Cannon (11th District Court of Appeals) provided insights and tips on how to maximize chances for success when preparing briefs and arguing in Ohio's appellate courts.



The day concluded with a valuable and informative presentation

from Derek Diaz on final appealable orders. The program, which was approved for specialty CLE hours toward the OSBA's Appellate Law Certification, was well attended. Thanks to all who contributed to make this program another success for OACTA.

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OACTA Social Media Opportunity

We would like to feature OACTA members in our social media! To be a featured member, send the following to OACTA@AssnOffices.com:

- Your name
- Position
- Link to your online biography
- In 2 sentences or less, complete the following: How has OACTA membership benefited you?

Nominate an OACTA member to be featured! Send the member name and email address to OACTA@AssnOffices.com and we will follow up to request the information needed.

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OACTA Website Upgrade

In an effort to provide premier services to our members and serve you in the best way possible, the OACTA website has been

upgraded. This website upgrade will allow us to offer some new features:

- The member directory, event calendar and forms are mobile-optimized.
- A mini Google Map automatically included in the event view.
- Search the member directory by address, zip code, city, state with pinpoint accuracy.
- One-click renewal process via auto-generated invoice.
- More intuitive, user-friendly forms with an updated look and feel.
- Improved multi-person registration options.
- Membership and event history viewable from member profile.
- Committees have a shared message board and file storage.

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Consider a Donation to the OACTA Foundation!

The OACTA Foundation (a 501(c)(3) organization) is organized exclusively for charitable and educational purpose. The Foundation funds projects consistent with the mission of OACTA, such as the annual OACTA Diversity Scholarship Program and supporting the National Foundation for Judicial Excellence (NFJE). Contributions made to The OACTA Foundation are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. [DONATE TO THE OACTA FOUNDATION TODAY.](#)

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Member News

DRI 2017 Election Results

At the 2017 DRI Annual Meeting, OACTA Past President, **Gary L. Grubler**, was elected as the new DRI Central Regional Director.

Congratulations Gary!

Herrnstein selected as OWBF Leader Institute participant

OACTA member **Kara Herrnstein**, an associate with Bricker & Eckler LLP, has been selected as a member of the 2017-2018 Ohio Women's Bar Foundation (OWBF) Leadership Institute. This prestigious program was created by top women leaders in Ohio to help women lawyers develop their leadership, business development and communication skills. Kara will join 18 women from around the state, many of which represent notable Ohio-based firms and companies.


Bricker & Eckler Managing Partner announces intention to step down


Bricker & Eckler LLP's Managing Partner **Kurt Tunnell**, an OACTA member, has announced his intention to step down from leadership of the firm at the end of his term on January 31, 2018. Additionally, he will be moving on from both the firm and the practice of law to pursue a "second half" of significance in service to others.

Kurt has been Managing Partner at Bricker & Eckler LLP since 2010. Under his leadership, the firm has thrived, with growth in the number of offices from three to six. Additional accomplishments include a commitment to health and wellness for attorneys and employees and a continuation of the firm's diversity and inclusion efforts.

A former Chief Legal Counsel to Ohio Governor George Voinovich, Kurt built a government relations law practice that centered on the intersection of public policy and politics and has been instrumental in leading coalitions to reform Ohio's civil justice system.

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