



# Annual Report

## 2019

### The OACTA Foundation

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# Table of Contents

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## Contents

Message From the 2020 OACTA Foundation President _____	1
Our Mission _____	2
Our History _____	3
2019 Financial Summary _____	4
2019 Board of Directors / Past Presidents _____	5
2019 Donor Support _____	6-7

**Message From the 2020 OACTA  
Foundation President  
*James N. Kline***

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2020 has proven to be a challenging year for everyone in their personal and professional lives. These challenges have been just as great for the OACTA Foundation, but with the help and support of a great group of directors, OACTA members and sponsors, the OACTA Foundation has risen to the challenge and looks as if it will successfully navigate these challenges with creative solutions that have become the hallmark of both OACTA and the OACTA Foundation.

The two main charitable endeavors of the OACTA Foundation continue to be directed towards scholarship and education. With respect to scholarship, the OACTA Foundation was excited to honor one of OACTA's most distinguished former chairs and members by renaming its scholarship program in his name as the Hillary S. Taylor Law Student Inclusion and Equity Scholarship. With respect to education, the other charitable endeavor for the Foundation is a donation to the National Foundation For Judicial Excellence (NFJE) which has the critical task of providing training and education to state court appellate judges around the country on issues of interest to the defense in civil litigation.

As many of you are aware, much of our funding for these endeavors comes from our annual golf outing typically conducted on the day after Labor Day. Due to the advent of Covid, and out of an abundance of caution, it was decided to forgo the actual golf outing this year despite the potential reduction in funding for these worthy charitable endeavors, as well as the loss of the wonderful social event that so many of us looked forward to with the golf outing. However, harnessing the creativity and initiative of OACTA members, Trustees and sponsors, the OACTA Foundation worked to develop a raffle to be held at the end of OACTA Annual Meeting – being held virtually – November 12 and 13, 2020 as an alternative event to help fund these noteworthy causes in place of the golf outing. While some might say it lacks the thrill of smacking a Titleist 270 yards right down the middle, it makes up for it in the satisfaction of seeing so many loyal members and sponsors stepping up with financial donations and prizes to assure that the OACTA Foundation and the causes it funds will not unduly suffer in 2020 and the foreseeable future due to the pandemic. For this, I am grateful to the wonderful group of directors including Jamey Pregon, Natalie M. E. Wais, Benjamin Sassé, and David W. Orlandini, our Secretary-Treasurer Debbie Nunner, as well as the able assistance of Laney Mollenkopf, the members of OACTA, and all our wonderful sponsors. I am proud of everyone's willingness to "step up" in furtherance of the mission of the OACTA Foundation under such difficult times. It truly makes this a wonderful moment for me to look back upon even as I depart from this position. I encourage all of you to continue your enthusiastic and critical support of this wonderful charitable organization and the various causes it funds, and hope I can count on you to make a donation if you have not already done so.

Thank you and farewell.

Jim Kline

## **Our Mission**

Established in 2015, The OACTA Foundation was organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes. The Foundation funds projects consistent with the mission of OACTA, such as the annual OACTA Inclusion and Equity Scholarship Program and the National Foundation for Judicial Excellence (NFJE). The OACTA Foundation is incorporated in Ohio as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization under the Internal Revenue Service. Contributions made to The OACTA Foundation are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Please consider contributing to The OACTA Foundation. Go to [www.oacta.org](http://www.oacta.org) to make a contribution. Your support is appreciated!

## **OACTA Law Student Inclusion & Equity Scholarships**

The OACTA Law Student Inclusion & Equity Scholarships are open to the following incoming second and third year law students who are enrolled in an Ohio law school or are a permanent Ohio resident: 1) Minority law students; 2) LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning) law students, regardless of race or ethnicity; 3) Female law students, regardless of race or ethnicity; or, 4) Law students from economically impoverished families/backgrounds, regardless of race or ethnicity. The criteria include academic achievements; service to the community and to the cause of inclusion and equity; and experience or interest in a civil defense practice.

Up to two (2) scholarships in the amount of \$2,500 each are awarded to successful applicants. Applicants are required to submit an application, law school transcript and a cover letter addressing the following: academic, personal and professional accomplishments, and why they should be selected as a recipient of the scholarship. Applicants must also submit at least one letter of recommendation but may submit a total of three. Applications must be submitted online with a cover letter. Transcripts and letter of recommendation may be mailed to the OACTA office. The completed applications and all other requested material must be received by May 15<sup>th</sup>.

## **OACTA Foundation Annual Golf Outing**

Since 2009, OACTA has conducted an annual Golf Outing. Net proceeds from the Golf Outing have benefitted the OACTA Foundation since 2016. Since its founding, the Golf Outing has been held at Pinnacle Golf Club in Grove City, Ohio, in early September. OACTA members, friends and colleagues gather for golf and fun and all for good causes! Net proceeds from the annual Golf Outing support the Law Student Inclusion and Equity Scholarships and the NFJE. Since its formation, the annual Golf Outing has generated over \$89,000 (through 12/31/19).

Established in October, 2015, the OACTA Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, dedicated to supporting OACTA projects, such as the OACTA Law Student Inclusion and Equity Scholarships and the National Foundation for Judicial Excellence (NFJE), and the broader educational and organizational goals of OACTA itself.

In 2016, OACTA hosted a 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala at the Ohio Statehouse in the Atrium and Rotunda. OACTA provided all the logistical and staff support for the event held in conjunction with the OACTA Annual Meeting in Columbus and the OACTA Foundation was the direct beneficiary of all net proceeds from the event. Sponsorships and contributions helped generate a net income to the OACTA Foundation in the amount of \$42,435.

2017 marked the first full year in which the entire OACTA Law Student Diversity Scholarship Program (now called the OACTA Law Student Inclusion and Equity Scholarship Program) and the Annual OACTA Golf Outing were fully administered through the OACTA Foundation, with significant administrative support from OACTA. The personal donations and contributions of individuals are fully eligible for favorable tax deductions for each generous donor to the OACTA Foundation for these and all future OACTA Foundation programs and events.

Since the OACTA Law Student Inclusion and Equity Scholarships were first awarded in 2011, OACTA and the Foundation have collectively awarded \$32,500 in scholarships to 22 students (as of 12/31/19). In addition to the Inclusion and Equity Scholarship Awards, OACTA has been a national leader among all defense bar organizations across the country both in its level of support and total years of support for the National Foundation for Judicial Excellence (NFJE). The NFJE is a unique program among national and state defense bar programs which seeks to train appellate court judges from around the country at an annual seminar held each year in Chicago. Before 2009, OACTA had made annual contributions to the NFJE from its general operating budget. The annual Golf Outing began in 2009 to fund these projects and since 2016, net proceeds fund the annual Golf Outing fund the OACTA Foundation.

Looking to the future, the goals of the Foundation include a commitment to continue OACTA's historic support for the NFJE, and the continued funding of Law Student Inclusion & Equity Scholarships, as well as increasing both the amount and number of scholarships which can be awarded to deserving law students in the future. Last, but not least, the Foundation exists to serve as a vehicle to receive even more support from existing and future donors who support the above activities and the welfare and existence of OACTA itself.

- Foundation provides scholarships to law students of diverse backgrounds to further their education.
- Foundation provides annual financial support to the NFJE which focuses specifically on education for the state appellate judiciary.
- Foundation will continue to support the mission of OACTA in these and future projects.

The OACTA Foundation is the only organization of its kind led by the Ohio Defense Bar.

As of 12/31/19, the total assets of the OACTA Foundation are \$43,881.58. In 2016, at the 50th Anniversary Gala Event, the OACTA Foundation raised over \$42,000 with the generous support of individual attorneys, law firms, corporations, and sponsors of OACTA. Expenses for 2019 accurately reflect the OACTA Foundation mission – educating future lawyers with diverse backgrounds and supporting the education of the judiciary. Since 2016 was a pivotal year near the inception of the creation of the OACTA Foundation, the main thrust was to create a “nest egg” to build on for future goals and financial stability of the OACTA Foundation. The OACTA Foundation Golf Outing is the annual fundraising event and the Law Student Inclusion and Equity Scholarship Program and NFJE contribution are the annual expenses. OACTA conducts an audit every-other year, alternating between a full audit and a financial audit review. When this is conducted, the OACTA Foundation is included in the process. A financial review was conducted by a certified public accountant as of 12/31/18 and the results were satisfactory with no modifications suggested. OACTA continues to provide significant administrative and staff support for the Foundation programs.

In 2019, support in the amount of \$250 was provided to the Black Law Students Association (BLSA) at Case Western Reserve University School of Law. This organization requested sponsorship support to assist with the cost of travel and lodging for their BLSA Trial Advocacy Program Team to compete in the Constance Baker Motley Mock Trial Competition (CBMMTC) in Chicago. Contributions were requested to ensure that young, aspiring trial attorneys are prepared to advocate for their clients in the courts of law across the nation. The OACTA Foundation Board determined this met within the mission of the OACTA Foundation.

<b>Description</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Net Surplus</b>
<b>Golf</b>	\$19,545	\$9,989	
<b>General Contributions</b>	\$2,665		
<b>Inclusion &amp; Equity Scholarships</b>		\$5,000	
<b>NFJE</b>		\$5,000	
<b>Donation to BLSA</b>		\$250	
<b>Operating</b>		\$599	
<b>Accounting Fees</b>		\$905	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$22,210</b>	<b>\$21,743</b>	<b>\$467</b>

# **Pg. 5      Board of Directors/ Past Presidents**

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## **OACTA Foundation Board of Directors**

### ***President (OACTA Immediate Past President)***

**Jill K. Mercer**  
Nationwide Insurance  
Columbus, Ohio

### ***Secretary-Treasurer (OACTA Executive Director)***

**Debbie Nunner**  
Executive Director of OACTA  
Columbus, Ohio

### ***Directors***

**James N. Kline**  
Ulmer & Berne LLP  
Cleveland, Ohio

**Jamey M. Pregon**  
American Family  
Columbus, Ohio

**Natalie M. E. Wais**  
Young & Alexander Co.  
Cincinnati, OH

**Benjamin Sassé**  
Tucker Ellis LLP  
Cleveland, OH

*The Members of the 2019 OACTA FOUNDATION consisted of the 2019 OACTA Board of Trustees.*

## **OACTA Foundation Past Presidents**

**2018 – Brian D. Kerns**

**2017 – John J. Garvey, III**

**2016 – James L. Mann**

Thank you to all of our individual and institutional donors who generously contributed to the OACTA Foundation in 2019.

**Contributions of \$1000 or more:**

**John Garvey III**, Garvey Shearer Nordstrom PSC

**Contributions of \$500 or more:**

**Jill Mercer**, Nationwide Insurance

**Contributions of \$250 or more:**

**James McCrystal, Jr.**, Sutter O'Connell Co.

**Contributions of \$100 or more:**

**ARCCA**

**Melanie Irvin**, Branch

**James Kline**, Bonezzi Switzer Polito & Hupp Co. L.P.A

**Jamey Pregon**, American Family Mutual Insurance Company

**Elizabeth Smith**, Vorys Sator Seymour & Pease LLP

**Natalie Wais**, Young & Alexander Co. LPA

**Contributions of \$25 or more:**

**Keith Ganther**, Greater CRTA

**Catherine Geyer**, Supreme Court of Ohio

**James Mann**, Attorney James L. Mann

**David Orlandini**, Collins, Roche, Utley & Garner, LLC

**Daniel Richards**, Weston Hurd LLP

**Benjamin Sassé**, Tucker Ellis LLP

**2019 GOLF OUTING:**

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TCDI

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