VOLUME 76 | NUMBER 10

NOVEMBER 2026

RIVERSIDE LAWYER



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RIVERSIDE LAWYER
MAGAZINE

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PRESIDENT'S *Message*

by Elisabeth A. Lord



As we head full throttle into the holiday season, I remind myself of all I have to be thankful for and the importance of giving back to our community. The holidays offer so many opportunities to show our gratitude for the good fortune we, as attorneys, enjoy. Whether we choose to give to a food bank, foster a shelter dog for the holidays, or donate to our favorite charity, giving back can have a meaningful impact to those amongst us in need. I encourage all of us to not forget our blessings and share as we are able.

RCBA offers many opportunities to give back. Of notorious mention this time of year is our Elves program. Our Elves program offers many opportunities to support our community. Each year, the Elves program selects several families in need to make sure they have presents under their tree Christmas morning. To support this endeavor, we need volunteers to shop for presents, wrap presents, deliver presents, and donate funds. An email with dates for shopping, wrapping and delivery of gifts will go out soon. If you are short on time, donations of any size are welcome.

Project Graduate also offers opportunity to give back. I mentioned Project Graduate in last month's article. Project Graduate continues to be in need of volunteers to serve as Educational Representatives for a foster child trying to graduate high school. This is a rewarding opportunity to make significant impact and difference in a young person's life.

I would like to thank all our members that attended our last general membership meeting and thank our presenter, the Honorable Jack Lucky (retired), for his informative and entertaining presentation on civility. Thank you to the Riverside County Bar Association for sponsoring the meeting and providing lunch for our members. This presentation made the case that civility in the practice of law constitutes zealous and effective advocacy for our clients. Thank you, Judge Lucky, for your time and the insights you shared on civility.

Our next general membership meeting will be on Friday, November 13. District Attorney Michael Hestrin and Public Defender Steven Harmon will be presenting. Blumenthal & Moore along with Grech, Packer & Hanks will be sponsoring the meeting and providing lunch. I hope to see you all there.

In our profession, the approach of the Thanksgiving holiday has a special meaning...bar results. We all remember the weeks leading up to the release of results just in time to see our families for the holidays. The California bar exam has assured that those entering the practice of law had the tenacity, muster, and competency to succeed. However, in recent years there have been proposed changes to the bar exam that I believe all our members should be aware of. Regardless of your opinion, I believe our members should voice either their support or opposition to proposed changes.

The first bar exam was administered in 1919 with the goal of establishing formal standards for entry into the legal profession. Originally a three-day exam, the California bar exam was considered one of the most difficult exams in the country. In 2017, the exam was reduced to a two-day exam which continued to thoroughly test the legal skills and knowledge of applicants.

This last year, the California Supreme Court approved a transition to the Next-Gen bar exam format. This format will be implemented in 2028. This change in format was objected to by a multitude of bar associations to include the Riverside County Bar Association. The Next-Gen bar exam, in its current format, does not specifically test California subjects such as community property and wills and trusts. The exam is administered over a total of nine hours over three sessions lasting three hours each. It is anticipated that California subjects may be added in the future.

These changes to our bar exam started in 2021, when the California Supreme Court and State Bar formed the Blue Ribbon Commission on the future of the bar exam. The goal of this review was to reduce cost and to increase access. After two years, the Commission recommended that California continue to develop its own reforms to the exam and not adopt the Next-Gen format. Despite this recommendation, on July 15, 2026, the California Supreme Court approved the adoption of the Next-Gen Uniform Bar Examination which will be administered starting in July 2028. The Supreme Court did include in their order a direction to the State Bar to

develop a California specific examination component for potential implementation in July 2029.

As our State Bar continues to grill down on members regarding issues of competency and ethics, it seems counter-intuitive to eliminate Caifornia's rigorous licensing process for new attorneys. This process helps ensure those entering this esteemed profession are competent and ethical.

This process of reform is ongoing. I encourage our members to reach out to our State Bar and to RCBA to let us know your views on these changes. Our board is active in this ongoing conversation and supports an exam that continues to ensure competency in our profession. Whatever is ultimately decided, we should make sure our voices are heard.

Elisabeth Lord is a family law practitioner and partner at Lord and Brooker, APC and president of the Riverside County Bar Association.





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BARRISTERS
President's Message

by Nolan B. Kistler



Building Community Through Connection and Service

As we enter November and approach the holiday season, I find myself reflecting on one of the things that makes our Riverside legal community so special: the willingness of its members to show up for one another. Whether through mentorship, volunteer work, or simply taking the time to welcome someone new, those small acts of involvement are what make organizations like Barristers meaningful.

Our first few events of the term have been a wonderful reminder of that spirit. It has been great seeing familiar faces, meeting new attorneys, and watching members of our legal community come together, not only to develop professional relationships but also to learn how we can better serve those around us.

Past Events Recap

On September 30, we kicked off our term with our first Barristers Happy Hour at Route 30 Brewing Co., in partnership with Inland Counties Legal Services (ICLS).

We were fortunate to have attorney and ICLS representative, Paulette Gray, join us to discuss the important work ICLS performs throughout our community, as well as the many ways attorneys can become involved through volunteer legal services.

I especially appreciated the opportunity to highlight an organization whose work directly impacts individuals and families throughout the Inland Empire. Barristers is about building relationships among young attorneys, but those relationships become even more valuable when they create opportunities to give back.

Thank you to Paulette, ICLS, and everyone who joined us for a great evening and helped kick off our year!

We also continued one of our favorite annual traditions with our Joint Bar Happy Hour at Lake Alice on October 22.

This year, Barristers joined forces with the Riverside County Bar Association (RCBA), Asian Pacific American Lawyers of the Inland Empire (APALIE), Hispanic Bar Association of the Inland Empire (HBAIE), Pride Bar Association of the Inland Empire (PBAIE), and Richard T. Fields Bar Association (RTFBA).

It is always a pleasure to see our local bar associations come together under one roof. Events like this remind us that although we may belong to different organizations, we are all part of the same legal community. The opportunity to reconnect with colleagues, make new introductions, and strengthen those relationships is what makes this annual gathering so worthwhile.

A special thank you to our participating bar associations for helping make this event possible!

Upcoming Events: You're Invited!

Our next Barristers Happy Hour will take place on Friday, November 13, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. at The State, located at 3800 Main Street in downtown Riverside.

Whether you are a regular at our events or have been considering attending for the first time, we would love to see you there. Feel free to bring a colleague and help us continue welcoming new faces into the Barristers community!

As we head into the holiday season, I also encourage everyone to consider giving back, whether through volunteer legal services, supporting a local organization, or simply lending a hand to someone who needs it. Our community is strongest when we make the time to invest in one another.

Barristers Board Spotlight: Erika Perez, 2026–2027 Member-at-Large



Erika is an attorney with Michael Sullivan & Associates LLP, where she practices workers' compensation defense. She joined the Barristers while in law school and is currently serving her first year on the Board.

As a first-generation attorney, Erika understands the value of finding a supportive professional community early in one's career. The encouragement, professional relationships, and willingness of members to share their knowledge and experience have made a lasting impression on her and contributed meaningfully to her professional growth.

Outside of her legal practice, Erika enjoys exploring new hobbies and embracing opportunities to learn and grow. Whether developing a new skill or taking on a new challenge, she values lifelong learning and the personal growth that comes from stepping outside her comfort zone.

This curiosity and enthusiasm for continuous development also inspire her involvement with the Barristers Board.

Through her service on the Board, Erika hopes to foster a welcoming and inclusive environment for law students and new attorneys as they begin their legal careers. She is passionate about building meaningful connections, supporting professional development, and ensuring that emerging legal professionals have access to the guidance and encouragement needed to succeed. Erika believes that a strong legal community is built on mentorship, collaboration, and a genuine commitment to investing in the next generation of attorneys.

Stay up to date on everything Barristers!

For upcoming events and updates:

Website: RCBA Barristers

Facebook: RCBA Barristers

Instagram: @rcbabarristers

If you are interested in learning more about Barristers or attending one of our events, please reach out. I would be happy to introduce you to our Barristers family. Feel free to email me at nolan@hbklaw.net or text or call me at (951) 533-9536.

Nolan B. Kistler is an attorney with the Law Offices of Harlan B. Kistler in Riverside, where he practices personal injury law. A Riverside native, Nolan graduated from Chapman University Fowler School of Law and is actively involved in the Riverside County Bar Association and Barristers.

Letters from the Members

Dear Charlene,

I was motivated to write because I am extremely impressed by this month's issue of the *Riverside Lawyer.* While each month I look forward to reading this high-quality publication, the October edition commemorating the 75th anniversary of the journal is fascinating. The theme, supported by great articles, truly presents a snapshot of the legal community as it existed in 1951. It certainly serves us well to remember where we came from.

I was wondering if you could do me a favor and pass on my congratulations for a superb issue to all those responsible — Jacqueline Carey-Wilson, of course, and all of the authors and others who had a hand in its publication.

Thanks again for all the great work you, your staff, and the Association officers do.

Respectfully,

Judge Jeff Prevost (Ret.)

Dear Jackie,

Congrats to you and the Publications Committee on the October issue of the *Riverside Lawyer*. I read every word. Well done!

Sincerely,

Judge Craig Riemer (Ret.)

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One Small Act Leads to a Bigger Impact

by Mary Shafizadeh

Many of us didn't pursue law solely for the income or prestige. We pursued it to be a voice for those who cannot always navigate the system alone, to protect people's rights, their families, their freedom, and their livelihoods. We did it to bring clarity to a system that can be needlessly complicated and to advocate for fairness when the law doesn't make the path forward clear.

That instinct, the pull toward protecting others, doesn't stop with our own clients. If part of the "why" behind our profession is protecting others, then helping another lawyer get better at that work is not a separate act of generosity. Sharpening a colleague's legal knowledge, strengthening their skills in practice, or helping them find the discipline to sustain a career without losing themselves in it reaches further than the person in front of us. It reaches the people that lawyer will one day represent. And that is what makes the impact so much larger than the act itself.

This isn't only inspiring rhetoric. There is research that offers another way to think about how individual actions can ripple through a network. Researchers Nicholas A. Christakis and James H. Fowler, studying the social network within the Framingham Heart Study, found that obesity spread through social ties in clusters that extended as far as three degrees of separation.[1] A subsequent study by the same researchers found the same pattern in happiness, which was also associated across social networks up to three degrees of separation.[2]

Although the researchers were studying health and social behavior, not legal knowledge or competence, their finding offers a useful reminder: what happens between two people does not necessarily stay between two people. Our actions can travel through the networks we are part of, sometimes reaching people we will never meet. That idea matters in this profession.

Every lawyer, new or seasoned, eventually hits a moment of not knowing: a legal process that fell outside what civil or criminal procedure covered in school, a client crisis no casebook anticipated, an unfamiliar form, or a strange local rule encountered for the first time. We have treatises, databases, and CLEs, but sometimes what we need isn't another hour of research. It's five minutes with a lawyer who has already been where we are. A form shared. A procedure explained. A simple, "I've been there."

Giving back doesn't have to be formal, a standing commitment, or a seat on a CLE panel. Those things matter, but generosity in this profession doesn't always require that much of us. Sometimes it's a phone call. An honest answer. A shared document. An introduction. An invitation to observe. Or a door left open with the words, "Just call me if you get stuck."

Sometimes five minutes is enough to change the course of someone's day, a case, or even their confidence in their ability to practice.

We can teach procedure and precedent, but we can also teach what no casebook covers: how to manage a caseload without losing yourself in it, how to build workflows so no step or deadline slips through, how to communicate with difficult clients, how to set boundaries, and how to run a practice more efficiently.

There is also something else we can give newer lawyers that costs us nothing: permission to not know. This profession has a way of making us feel as though we should already have the answer. But no lawyer has all the answers. When experienced attorneys stay approachable, they create space for a small uncertainty to be resolved with a question rather than discovered later as a costly mistake.

A more confident, better-equipped attorney can advocate more effectively. Their clients may feel the difference even if they never know its source. One shared form can help produce one better-prepared case. One better-prepared case can mean a client who feels heard and represented. A quick conversation can be the reason a lawyer walks into court more prepared, more confident, and more capable of advocating for someone who has nowhere else to turn. We may never trace that thread to its end, but we can set it in motion.

And that generosity isn't one-directional, either. The lawyer who asks for help today may be the lawyer someone else turns to tomorrow. The person who receives a five-minute favor may eventually become the person who gives five minutes to someone else.

Teaching gives something back to us, too. Explaining what we know forces us to understand it more deeply. It can remind us why we started. It can create meaningful professional relationships and restore a sense of purpose that can so easily become buried beneath deadlines, dockets, and the daily demands of practice.

None of this requires looking far. For example, getting involved with RCBA, whether through a section, a committee, a social gathering, or a CLE you already planned to attend, puts you in the room with people who may need exactly what you have to offer. You don't have to wait for a formal mentorship program. You just have to be willing to be reachable.

The lawyer we help today may be the one standing beside a frightened client tomorrow, defending someone's freedom, helping a family through a difficult transition, pro-

1 Nicholas A. Christakis & James H. Fowler, *The Spread of Obesity in a Large Social Network over 32 Years*, 357 New Eng. J. Med. 370 (2007).

2 ames H. Fowler & Nicholas A. Christakis, *Dynamic Spread of Happiness in a Large Social Network: Longitudinal Analysis over 20 Years in the Framingham Heart Study,* 337 BMJ a2338 (2008).

tecting someone's business or livelihood, or advocating for someone who otherwise would not know where to turn.

We may never know where a five-minute conversation, a shared form, a phone call, or a word of encouragement will eventually lead. But the impact does not end with the person we helped. It travels with them, to their clients, their families, their communities, and everyone whose life they will touch over the course of their career.

One small act can lead to a much bigger impact.

Mary Shafizadeh, of the Law Office of Maryam Shafizadeh, practices criminal law, family law, and intellectual property. Committed to helping individuals and entrepreneurs navigate new chapters, she provides robust defense in criminal cases, compassionate guidance through family law matters, and strategic support for creative and digital ventures in intellectual property.



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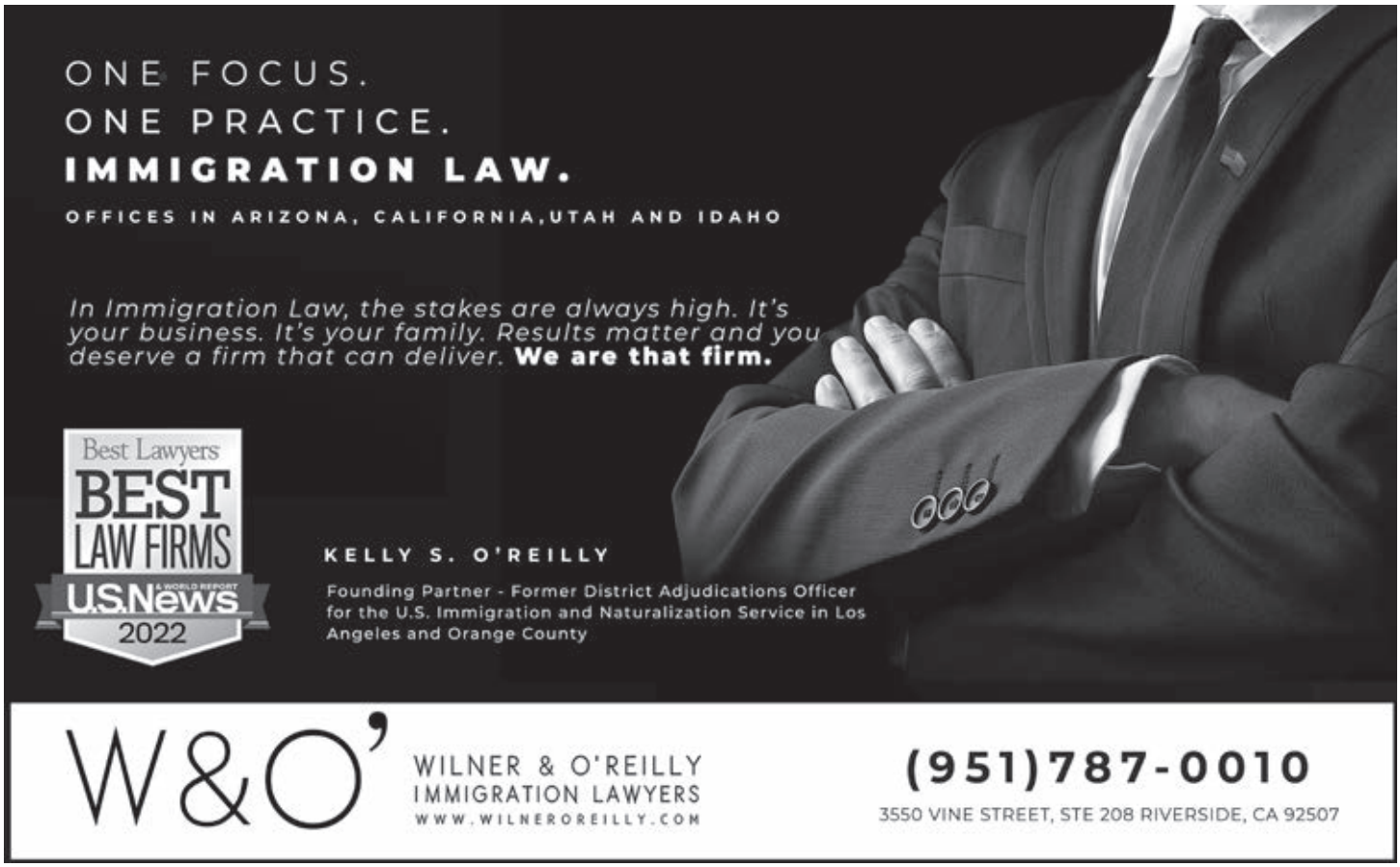
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Innovation and Flexibility: How Pro Bono Helps ICLS Meet Community Needs

by Margaret Austin

At Inland Counties Legal Services, the region's largest legal aid provider, flexibility is key in meeting the unique, complex needs of residents in Riverside and San Bernardino counties. The pro bono clinic model has enabled ICLS to innovate and expand its service offerings into areas not commonly offered by legal aid organizations.

Through the pro bono clinics, ICLS and their volunteers provide fresh starts and second changes through expungement, guide small business owners through legal issues, protect children from abuse through guardianship, support disaster survivors with the recovery process, and help people live authentically through Gender Marker Name Change assistance.

"When we identify gaps in services for community members, we strive to find creative solutions to meet those needs. Pro bono volunteers help us do just that," ICLS Deputy Director of Community Engagement Tori Praul said. "As attorneys, we have the power to use our skills to lift up those in need, and our pro bono program offers the opportunity to make a real difference."

With 165 staff members, including 65 staff attorneys, ICLS provides core legal services for seniors, people with disabilities, and those who couldn't otherwise afford legal assistance across a variety of practice areas: housing, consumer, health care, public benefits, elder law, immigration, and more. Impacting more than 20,000 residents in 2025, ICLS prevents evictions, protects consumers from predatory collection practices, increases access to health care, and so much more.

Even still, eligible clients are turned away due to lack of resources and proposed federal funding cuts threaten to worsen the issue. According to Legal Services Corportation's (LSC) 2022 Justice Gap study, low-income Americans do not get any or enough legal help for 92% of their substantial civil legal problems.

Protecting Children from Abuse

When it comes to guardianship, cases often involve child abuse and require a high level of care. Based on the demands for representation in these types of cases, ICLS launched a new pro bono clinic for guardianship in 2023.

Volunteers like Stephanie Veniez of Best Best & Krieger LLP make this program possible by seeing these complex cases through from start to finish. In one case, a child had been living with their grandmother for most of their life due to abuse, and the child's biological father filed the paperwork with the court to terminate the grandmother's guardianship.

The father would appear in court and make many objections, and the grandmother would become very upset. Stephanie provided the grandmother with legal guidance and emotional support, and once she became the attorney of record on the case, the father decided he did not want to pursue the termination. Stephanie remained as counsel on this case, safeguarding the minor's interests, and obtained orders granting guardianship to the grandmother.

Thanks to Stephanie, a family was able to stay together, and a child remained in a stable and loving household.

"Giving someone the space to feel heard can be just as important as the legal outcome itself. Legal knowledge matters, but advocacy is most valuable when it gives a client greater clarity, confidence, and agency over the decisions affecting their life," Stephanie said.

Having an attorney makes all the difference for clients in asserting their rights in court. Thanks to a grant award from the State Bar of California, ICLS will expand its guardianship services through a new partnership with the Riverside County Court System – to provide pre-petition support to caregivers and better support pro se litigants.

Making the Difference for Low-Income Survivors

With a new Pro Bono Innovation Fund grant from LSC, the largest funder of legal aid in the U.S., ICLS will also be expanding its pro bono offerings to include domestic violence restraining order assistance. Family law services are one of the highest areas of demand for ICLS, and the organization's staff attorneys cannot meet the demand for assistance alone.

"Our domestic violence restraining order (DVRO) clinic will provide more than legal assistance. It will offer survivors a pathway to safety, stability, and empowerment by helping them navigate a complex legal process during one of the most vulnerable times in their lives," ICLS DVRO Pro Bono Coordinator Marisol Chianello said.

According to LSC, low-income survivors of domestic violence seek professional legal help for only 23% of their problems. That means many survivors are navigating complex legal systems and showing up in court to face their abusers alone.

With the grant funding, awarded on Oct. 14, ICLS will build out a pro bono DVRO clinic, where private attorney volunteers will be connected with clients in need.

"No survivor of domestic violence should be denied safety because they cannot afford an attorney or do not

know where to turn for help," said Rep. Norma Torres (CA-35). "As a former 911 dispatcher, I know the devastating consequences of not having access to affordable legal representation. This investment will put experienced legal advocates in the corner of survivors across Riverside and San Bernardino counties when they need them most. I'm proud to see these resources coming to the Inland Empire to help survivors seek protection, rebuild their lives, and know that they do not have to face the legal system alone."

Civil legal aid reduces repeat incidents of domestic violence, thus cutting public spending on medical care, special education and counseling for affected children, and police resources.

For those interested in getting involved in ICLS, please email deputy director of Community Engagement Tori Praul at tpraul@icls.org.

Donating to a legal aid organization also directly supports free legal services for those in need. ICLS is largely funded by state and federal grants, and private donations allow more flexibility in meeting needs of clients, like covering filing fees and removing other barriers to services. You can support ICLS at inlandlegal.org/giving.

Margaret Austin is the communications manager for Inland Counties Legal Services, focusing on community legal education, outreach, and community engagement.

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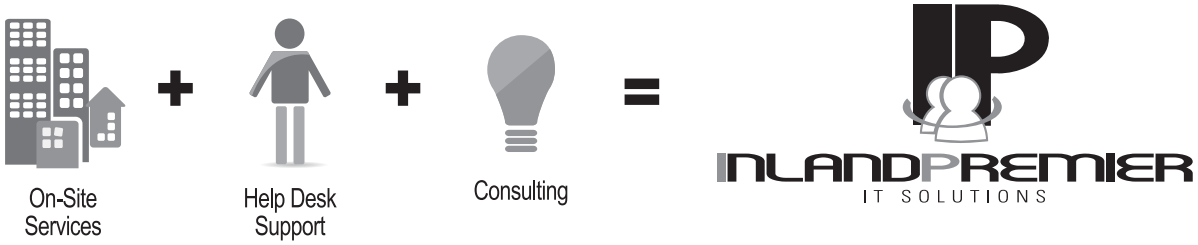
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William Bradford's *Of Plymouth Plantation*

by Abram S. Feuerstein

Great nations have founding myths. And they also have founding realities. With the approach of Thanksgiving, revisiting William Bradford's classic memoir of the Pilgrim's journey to America, and understanding who they were and what they did after they arrived, is helpful to a sorting out of the fiction from the facts. But it is also just a good read.[1]



The First Thanksgiving, 1621
Jean Leon Gerome Ferris (c.1912-1915)

Bradford's work, written in what he describes as the "plain style," is a primary source and the most complete account of the early Plymouth settlers and settlement. Bradford had been the governor of Plymouth for most of the colony's first three and one-half decades. Unpublished in his lifetime, after he died in 1657, the manuscript remained with the family for a few generations. It then ended up in a Boston church library where during the Revolution and the occupation of Boston, it likely fell into British hands, only to surface a few decades later in the Bishop of London's library. A version of the book was published in the 1850s. With much fanfare the work returned to Boston in the late 1890s, where it has remained as a national treasure stored in the Massachusetts state library.

At an early age, the self-educated Bradford living in the small English town of Scrooby, England, joined a group of religious separatists who believed that the Church of England had been corrupted by its seeming imitation of papal pomp and ceremonies. The separatists believed that the Church needed to be "purified," and returned as close as possible to the original church observing the literal language of the Bible. As Congregationalists, the Scrooby group did not believe that a person needed an organized church with a bishop to receive the teachings of Christ.

Persecuted for their beliefs under King James I, the group of approximately 300 people secretly made their way in 1608-1609 to Holland where they settled in Leiden. Although appreciating their religious freedom, they never truly adjusted to life in Holland and feared their children were becoming Dutch. So they sought a new Jerusalem, to be located in one of Britain's newly established colonies. Either British Guiana (now Guyana), or in Virginia. They eventually picked Virginia.

Financing the voyage proved difficult. Private investors (known as Merchant Adventurers) imposed stringent conditions. These included accepting non-religious passengers, known as "The Strangers" by the Pilgrims, to help finance the venture and supply manpower to the new colony. Bradford recounts that one of their two ships, the poorly named Speedwell, proved unseaworthy, leaving only the Mayflower and causing half of the congregation to remain behind. As a result of these financial driven delays, the Mayflower did not leave England until September 6, 1620, which necessarily guaranteed a winter arrival for the Pilgrims. And whether it was on purpose or the stormy seas or a malfunctioning compass, the ship ended up arriving in the Cape Cod area, and not Virginia.

The Mayflower Compact

When they realized that they were not heading to Virginia, Bradford notes that the Strangers began to make "mutinous" statements and, deprived of the benefit of their bargain, they no longer felt bound by their agreements with the investors. But the passengers came together and with their ship anchored near what is today Provincetown, most of the male adult passengers entered a compact to form a "Civil Body Politick." It envisioned that:

> for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof to enact, constitute and frame such just and equal laws, Ordinances, Acts, Constitutions and Offices from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the Colony, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience.

With its creation of a government based on the consent of the governed, the 200-word Mayflower Compact represents the first governing document in America and guided the Plymouth colony for decades.

Then, having crossed a "vast ocean," and looking from the ship at what lay ahead of them, Bradford realizes that there will be "no friends to welcome them nor inns to entertain or refresh their weatherbeaten bodies; no houses or much less towns to repair to, to seek for succor." For sure, no Holiday Inns. Instead, they would have to confront winter, "and they know that the winters . . . could be

1 Numerous versions of the work have been published, including ones with modernized language. The most widely available, and the one read by this article's author, is the one from 1920 that had been "rendered into modern English by Harold Paget." A well-received 400th Anniversary Edition with modernized language was published in 2020 by the New England Historic Genealogical Society. See K. Minkema, F.J. Bremer and J. Bangs, *Of Plimoth Plantation by William Bradford: The 400th Anniversary Edition* (New England Historic Genealogical Society 2020).

sharp and violent, and subject to cruel and fierce storms, dangerous to travel to known places much more to search an unknown coast," Bradford observes. "Besides, what could they see but a hideous and desolate wilderness, full of wild beasts and wild men – and what multitudes there might be of them they knew not."

And if the reader of Bradford's journal did not realize that this was a journey impelled by faith, Bradford writes: "What could now sustain them but the Spirit of God and His grace? May not and ought not the children of these fathers rightly say: 'Our fathers were Englishmen which came over this great ocean, and were ready to perish in this wilderness; but they cried unto the Lord, and He heard their voice and looked on their adversity,' etc. 'Let them therefore praise the Lord because He is good: and his mercies endure forever.'"



Painting of Edward Winslow from life. Located at the Pilgrim Hall Museum in Plymouth, it is the only verified portrait of a Mayflower Pilgrim.

Here are a few other themes that emerge from Bradford's remarkable journal.

First Thanksgiving

The author previously in these pages has written about the real first Thanksgiving, relying mostly on Nathaniel Philbrick's *Mayflower: A Story of Courage, Community and War*.[2] A brutal winter and illness (likely scurvy, pneumonia, or exposure) had claimed the lives of half of the 100 or so Pilgrims. Bradford's narrative does not discuss the grieving that must have overwhelmed the survivors. Then, out of nowhere in March 1621 a couple of English-speaking natives appeared, Samoset and Squanto (short for Tisquantum).[3] Squanto particularly taught the colonists how to cultivate native corn, beans and squash. And how to catch game; and where they could fish. The two also acted as intermediaries with Massasoit (aka Ousamequin, meaning "Yellow Feather"), the grand sachem or leader of the Wampanoag Confederacy, enabling the Pilgrims to reach a mutual protection agreement with the Wampanoag that lasted for decades.



The Landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth Rock, 1620 Peter F. Rothermel (1854); Lafayette College Art Collection.

By summer Bradford records that the colonists regained their health and strength and began to gather their harvest and store cod and bass. They had "all things in good plenty" and "all the summer there was no want." As winter approached, they had access to waterfowl "of which this place did abound," as well as wild turkeys, "of which they took many, besides venison, etc."

And that's it. Bradford's journal does not provide any kind of a description of a single gathering centered on food or on the harvest; a description of native guests; or of the football games on TV. For an understanding of what took place at the first Thanksgiving, a reader has to switch accounts to a December 1621 letter written by Pilgrim leader Edward Winslow, the only other primary source about the event.[4] In it, Winslow describes that sometime in late September or early October 1621, several men went to hunt fowl and returned to celebrate with the others. Among other "recreations, (they) exercised (their guns), many of the Indians coming amongst us, and amongst the rest their greatest king Massasoit, with some ninety men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted, and they went out and killed five Deer, which they brought to the Plantation."

What we observe as Thanksgiving today in tribute to the Pilgrims traces to the time of the Civil War when, on October 3, 1863, Abraham Lincoln issued a Proclamation of Thanksgiving, designating the last Thursday of November as a national day of Thanksgiving and Praise.[5] Of note, to emphasize the distortions in both the traditional view of the holiday and the historic injustices to Native Americans, the Wampanoag and other East Coast tribes celebrate a National Day of Mourning.[6]

A Business Venture

Large parts of Bradford's journal relate to the financial condition of the colonists as they struggle to repay their debts and settle their accounts with the British investors. The

2 *See* Abram S. Feuerstein, "The Real First Thanksgiving,"I (November 2015) (hereafter, "Feuerstein, First Thanksgiving"). Philbrick's work, too, is heavily relied upon here. Philbrick himself notes that Bradford's *Of Plymouth Plantation* is the "greatest book written in seventeenth-century America." Nathaniel Philbrick, *Mayflower: A Story of Courage, Community and War* (Viking 2006) (hereafter, "*Mayflower*"), p. 7.

3 A tall and naked Samoset walked into the Pilgrim's settlement and greeted them with the words, "Welcome Englishmen." He had learned broken English likely from encounters with English fishing vessels operating off the coast of Maine. Squanto learned English after he had been captured by an English ship captain in 1614, sold into slavery in Spain, released and found his way to London for a few years, and then returned to America. Feuerstein, First Thanksgiving.

4 For the observation that Winslow's account is the only other primary source pertaining to Thanksgiving, *see https://www.pilgrimhall.org/primary-sources-for-the-first-thanksgiving-at-plymouth/.* Native accounts would have been handed down through an oral tradition.

5 George Washington, John Adams, and James Madison had issued similar proclamations, but Thanksgiving did not become an annual celebration until Lincoln's Thanksgiving Day proclamation. *See https://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-resources/spotlight-primary-source/thanksgiving-proclamation-1863.*

6 *See generally, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Day_of_Mourning_(United_States_protest).*

economics can be a little dry for some and fascinating for others. To retire their debt, the colonists mostly sent back to England beaver furs and otter skins. Prices fluctuate; loaded ships get captured by the French or otherwise lost; accounting records are misplaced; business partners take advantage of the trusting Pilgrims. The Plymouth Plantation is surpassed by other settlements, such as the many times larger Massachusetts Bay Colony established in 1630 under John Winthrop, or Dutch controlled Manhattan. Years go by but eventually the debt is repaid.

Most interesting is Bradford's commentary on the colony's initial failed experiment with communal economics, which Bradford states "created confusion and discontent," and "retard(ed) much employment." He notes that communal service had been "tried for several years, and by good and honest men" in Plymouth, but it is only when families are given their own land to farm that the colony generates surpluses and begins to prosper. To Bradford, this "proves the emptiness of the theory of Plato and other ancients, applauded by some of later times, -- that the taking away of private property, and the possession of it in the community by a commonwealth, would make a state happy and flourishing; as if they were wiser than God." The deeply religious Bradford easily is able to square concepts of Christian brotherhood and charity with an economy that provides private enterprise incentives.



Thanksgiving postcard with a turkey and football player (circa 1900). Public domain, U.S.



Thanksgiving with Indians (1940) N.C. Wyeth; Brandywine Museum of Art (Public Domain with artist's death in 1945)

Relations with Native Populations

In Holland initially and then on board the Mayflower, Bradford's journal reveals a deep fear of the "savages" the Pilgrims believe they would encounter in America. But upon arriving, they encountered very few natives and learn that a plague — almost certainly introduced to the area by European fishermen — had recently decimated the once densely populated coastal area. The local Wampanoags may have suffered losses of up to 90 percent of their inhabitants. [7]Yet their neighboring adversaries, the Narragansetts, had few deaths. Just as the Pilgrims' survival depended on the help they received from Massasoit, Massasoit perceived that he needed an alliance with the English to strengthen his position against the Narragansetts. What evolved in March 1621 was a six-point agreement providing for their mutual protection that called upon each party to assist the other if attacked.

The peaceful, bi-cultural co-coexistence, although tense at times, lasted for 50 years and certainly through the end of period covered by Bradford's journal (1647). Relationships with other Native groups were not as peaceful. Bradford describes in detail the actions taken by Plymouth in its military encounters against Massasoit's enemies or when the colony believed it would be attacked. Particularly gruesome are the details of the colony's role in the slaughter and near elimination of the Pequot people.

The expansion of the New England settlements, land grabs, and growing injustices against the Natives resulted in isolated outbreaks of violence. Ultimately, these violent episodes could not be contained. Massasoit's son, Philip, having taken over the Wampanoag's leadership in 1662, entered alliances with other tribes. Total war – known as King Philip's War – broke out in 1675. It was the bloodiest war ever fought on American soil, the Civil War included. When it ended, one third to one-half of the hundreds of town in New England were burned down or abandoned, and 5,000 people were killed (three quarters of whom were Native Americans). And surviving Native Americans were put on slave ships heading to the West Indies.[8]

Bradford died at age 67 in 1657. He did not see the death and destruction resulting from King Philip's War. Towards the end of his journal, seemingly, there is a realization that the Pilgrim's religious experiment may not have succeeded fully as Plymouth residents relocate throughout New England and the colony is eclipsed by Massachusetts Bay.[9] Instead, Bradford highlights the deaths, marriages, and children of the original Mayflower passengers. Indeed, today millions of Americans can trace their ancestry to the original colonists. To Bradford, who clearly is writing for a future audience, the colonists had fruited and multiplied, which was a success of sorts.

The author is employed by the United States Department of Justice as an Assistant United States Trustee in the Riverside Office of the United States Trustee Program (USTP). The mission of the USTP is to protect the integrity of the nation's bankruptcy system and laws. The views expressed in the article belong solely to the author, and do not represent in any way the views of the United States Trustee, the USTP, or the United States Department of Justice.

7 *See* Marcy Vancil, "Differing Views of Pilgrims and American Indians in Seventeenth-Century New England," Created in 2007, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, retrieved at *https://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-resources/lesson-plan/differing-views-pilgrims-and-american-indians-seventeenth-century-new.*

8 Feuerstein, First Thanksgiving. With great poignancy Philbrick contrasts the "human cargo" of the arriving colonists on the Mayflower with the 180 Native American slaves departing for the West Indies on a ship called the Seaflower. *See Mayflower*, p. xiv.

9 The Plymouth colony formally is absorbed into Massachusetts Bay in 1691.

California's New Pro Bono Reporting Requirement: What Attorneys Need to Know

by Nesa Targhibi

California attorneys have a new item to add to the annual renewal checklist: reporting their pro bono and reduced-fee legal services to the State Bar. The requirement is new, but an important distinction should be made at the outset: California has not imposed a mandatory number of pro bono hours that attorneys must perform. Rather, attorneys are now required to report information about qualifying services they provided during the preceding year.[1]

The new reporting requirement began with the 2026 licensing-fee cycle and covers qualifying services performed during calendar year 2025. Reports are submitted through My State Bar Profile as part of the annual renewal process.[2] For attorneys accustomed to treating pro bono work as something tracked informally, or not tracked at all, the change means that keeping adequate records has become more important.

What Must Be Reported

The new requirement covers both pro bono legal services and certain reduced-fee legal services. Attorneys report their information through My State Bar Profile when completing annual renewal.[3]

The State Bar does not require an exact hour-by-hour accounting. Instead, attorneys report their hours using ranges. The available responses also include options for attorneys who did not track their hours, did not perform qualifying services, or decline to answer.[4]

The system is therefore designed to collect information about the volume of legal services being provided without turning annual renewal into an audit of individual time entries.

What Counts as Pro Bono?

The new reporting requirement is broader than simply asking whether an attorney took a traditional pro bono case. Under Business and Professions Code section 6073.1, qualifying pro bono services include providing or enabling the direct delivery of legal services without compensation to indigent individuals and to certain charitable, governmental, educational, and community organizations.[5]

The State Bar's guidance gives practical examples, including full or limited-scope representation, negotiation and settlement, screening and intake, brief legal services, "Know Your Rights" workshops, document preparation and review, legal research and writing, and litigation support.[6]

Reduced-fee legal services are also reportable when they meet the statutory definition. Generally, these are legal services provided at a substantially reduced rate affordable to persons of limited means, including qualifying services for certain nonprofit organizations and public law libraries.[7]

The practical lesson is that attorneys should not assume that only a traditional full representation counts. An attorney providing limited-scope assistance or participating in a qualifying legal clinic, for example, may have reportable hours.

Who Is Exempt?

The reporting requirement does not apply to every active licensee. Section 6073.2 identifies several exemptions, including attorneys employed by organizations primarily engaged in providing pro bono legal services and full-time employees, officers, or elected officials of the state, its political subdivisions, or the federal government.[8]

There is also an exemption for licensees whose current employer prohibits them from performing pro bono legal services, provided the attorney makes the required declaration in My State Bar Profile.[9]

Importantly, even attorneys who qualify for an exemption must declare their exemption status through My State Bar Profile.[10] Attorneys who are active for only part of the reporting year or whose employment changes during the year may have different reporting obligations, so the State Bar's current guidance should be consulted.

What This Means in Practice

For most attorneys, the simplest response to the new requirement is also the most practical: start keeping track.

A spreadsheet, timekeeping code, or other simple system can make the annual reporting process easier. Attorneys who already record pro bono time separately should confirm that their system captures the information they will need at renewal. Those who do not should consider creating a separate category for qualifying pro bono and reduced-fee work.

1 Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code § 6073.2(b) (2025); State Bar of Cal., *Frequently Asked Questions: Mandatory Pro Bono Reporting* (June 16, 2026).
2 State Bar of Cal., *Frequently Asked Questions: Mandatory Pro Bono Reporting*, supra note 1.
3 Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code § 6073.2(b) (2025); State Bar of Cal., *Report Your Pro Bono and Reduced Fee Legal Services Hours.*
4 State Bar of Cal., *Frequently Asked Questions: Mandatory Pro Bono Reporting*, supra note 1.
5 Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code § 6073.1(c) (2025).
6 State Bar of Cal., *Frequently Asked Questions: Mandatory Pro Bono Reporting*, supra note 1.
7 Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code §§ 6073.1(d), 6073.2(b)(2) (2025).
8 Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code § 6073.2(d) (2025); State Bar of Cal., *Frequently Asked Questions: Mandatory Pro Bono Reporting,* supra note 1.
9 Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code § 6073.2(d)(3) (2025); State Bar of Cal., *Frequently Asked Questions: Mandatory Pro Bono Reporting*, supra note
10 State Bar of Cal., *Frequently Asked Questions: Mandatory Pro Bono Reporting,* supra note 1.

At the same time, attorneys should not feel compelled to reconstruct nonexistent records or manufacture an estimate. The State Bar expressly permits an attorney to report that the attorney did not track pro bono or reduced-fee hours or did not perform any qualifying services.[11] And the statute provides that failure to comply with the reporting provisions is not grounds for disciplinary or administrative recourse.[12] The requirement is to report information, not to satisfy a numerical pro bono quota.

The Bigger Picture

California's longstanding professional expectation concerning pro bono service remains separate from the new reporting requirement. The State Bar encourages attorneys to provide at least 50 hours of pro bono legal services each year, but that figure remains an aspirational goal rather than a mandatory minimum.[13]

The reason for collecting better information is apparent from California's access-to-justice data. The State Bar's 2024 Justice Gap Study found that only 23% of California attorneys met the 50-hour pro bono goal in 2022. The study estimated that approximately 88,000 active California attorneys provided pro bono services that year, collectively contributing nearly 10 million hours of service.[14]

The new reporting requirement will give the State Bar better information about how much pro bono and reduced-fee service is being provided and how that service changes over time. The State Bar has said the information will be analyzed in aggregate to identify trends and support efforts to expand access to legal services.[15]

For California lawyers, then, the immediate obligation is straightforward: report what you did. The larger significance may be that California will now have a clearer picture of what its lawyers are doing to provide legal services to those who otherwise might go without them.

Nesa Targhibi is a sole practitioner and owner of Holborn Law APC based in Riverside and San Bernardino counties. She practices in the area of trust and probate.

11 Id.
12 Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code § 6073.2(g) (2025).
13 Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code § 6073.2(a) (2025); State Bar of Cal., *2024 California Justice Gap Study* 78 (2025).
14 State Bar of Cal., *2024 California Justice Gap Study* 78 (2025).
15 State Bar of Cal., *Frequently Asked Questions: Mandatory Pro Bono Reporting*, supra note 1.

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Judicial Profile: Honorable Misty Perry Isaacson

by Michael Gouveia

Meet the Honorable Misty Perry Isaacson: Riverside's New Bankruptcy Judge

"My advice to young lawyers is to get involved and give back to your community because you're going to get so much more than the work you put in."

The Honorable Misty Perry Isaacson was sworn in as a new Bankruptcy Judge for the Central District of California, Riverside Division on June 25, 2026.



Honorable Misty Perry Isaacson

Judge Perry Isaacson is no stranger to Riverside,[1] as she started her career as a staff attorney for Riverside Chapter 13 Trustee Amrane Cohen. Before taking the bench, she was a California Certified Bankruptcy Specialist who represented debtors and creditors in Chapter 7, Chapter 13, and Chapter 11 cases. For a time, she also worked as a trial attorney in the United States Trustee's Office. She served as a Ninth Circuit Lawyer Representative for the Central District of California from 2014 to 2018 and was the Chair for the Ninth Circuit's Lawyer Representative Coordinating Committee in 2023.

When did you first want to be a judge?

In 2014, I was serving as a Ninth Circuit Lawyer Representative, working with lawyers and community leaders from different practice areas and learning from their experiences. I also worked with Ninth Circuit judges to plan our conference programs. Hearing how much they loved their jobs made me think that perhaps becoming a judge was something I could do, too. I started taking steps in that direction because I knew I needed to become more involved and put myself out there. My family, however, tells me that becoming a judge was my goal from the get-go. I don't remember it that way!

Your family knows you best.

The story I've been told is that when I was in elementary school, I told my dad I wanted to be the first woman president. He said, "Most presidents have been lawyers, so you're going to have to go to law school first." Maybe that planted the seed. I think it helped shape my interest in becoming a lawyer and protecting people's rights. Even at a young age, I had a strong sense of wanting to do what was right and see justice served.

What are the challenges you see in the bankruptcy community?

Our bankruptcy bar is aging, and we need to bring in the next generation of lawyers to take the place of those who are leaving. We need to reach out to law schools and introduce students to bankruptcy law as a career they may not have considered but could really enjoy.

I didn't think of bankruptcy as a career path when I was in law school, but now I wouldn't trade it for the world.

What is your advice for a new attorney?

Get involved in your local legal community, whether through the bankruptcy forum, your bar association, or pro bono work. Young lawyers understandably want to work hard and make a living, but there's more to building a successful practice than just doing the work. You also have to learn how to develop relationships and bring in business. You have to become a rainmaker.

How do you make rain?

You make rain by shaking hands and getting to know people in your community. Young lawyers don't always recognize how important that is, and they may even feel intimidated by more experienced colleagues. But you have to put yourself out there, build relationships, and become visible in your legal community. That's how you build your own book of business and create opportunities for advancement.

And while you're building your career, remember to give back. We've been given so much: an education, a degree, and a license to practice law. Take a pro bono case or meet with a veteran. We have an obligation to give back to our community. What you give often comes back to you many times over.

What has been your biggest surprise upon taking the bench?

I don't know that it's been a surprise so much as how impressed I've been by the support of the Clerk's Office and my colleagues on the bench. I've been fortunate to have such a wonderful support system, and it's been incredible.

For most of my career, I worked at small firms, where you often have to figure things out on your own. Now, I have colleagues and staff I can turn to for support, and that has been wonderful. And, of course, there are no billable hours!

What is something you're going to stop doing in 2027?

This is something I've always struggle with because it's part of my personality. But since you put me on the spot, I'm going to try to stop worrying about the things I cannot control.

Thank you, Judge Perry Isaacson.

You are welcome.

Michael Gouveia is a local bankruptcy lawyer helping families with financial trouble.

1 Judge Perry Isaacson also wrote for the *Riverside Lawyer* magazine in September 2024, with "Harnessing Artificial Intelligence in Your Practice," in February 2025, with "Betting on Bankruptcy: the Dischargeability of Gambling Debts in the Online Sports Era"; and in March 2026, with "Real Estate in California Consumer Bankruptcy." Judge Perry Isaacson was President of the Inland Empire Bankruptcy Forum in 2024.

Opposing Counsel: Alejandro Barraza

by Juanita E. Mantz

Epitomizing What Giving Back Looks Like

I met Alejando Barraza, aka Alex Barraza as he is known by most, many years ago when we first worked together in Penal Code section 1368 incompetency proceedings court.



Alejandro Barraza

I was (and still am) with the Law Offices of the Riverside County Public Defender (where he had interned) and Barraza was with Virgina M. Blumenthal at that time handling conflict matters. We worked in the department for years together, a stressful and demanding practice that Barraza jumped into with both feet. I was always so impressed by the way he treated these most vulnerable clientele. He became a dear friend, and I look upon him as a pseudo cousin of sorts. As you can probably surmise, I was overjoyed when I was asked to write this profile on him.

Currently, Barraza is a criminal defense and immigration attorney at Arsany and Barraza, Attorneys at Law. On the day I interviewed him, he had just received a not guilty verdict on a serious felony case that went to jury in Los Angeles. Barraza handles a wide and varied set of criminal defense cases, with a specialty in defending those with mental health diagnoses, veterans, and non-citizens. With respect to immigration, he helps individuals navigate through a complex and ever-changing immigration system. He represents individuals seeking lawful status through family petitions, u-visa, special immigrant juvenile status, post-conviction relief, and other avenues. He also specializes in defending non-citizens seeking asylum and/or other statutory relief in removal proceedings.

But that does not give the full picture. He grew up in Anaheim, California and even worked at California Adventure as a cashier in the food arena. His mom was a factory worker and a caretaker for the elderly and his father, who sadly passed away a few years ago, worked in hospitality. Barraza excelled in school and was a self-professed nerd. He emphasized that his father and mother ingrained in him a strong work ethic and a dedication to helping those less fortunate than him.

Barraza earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in criminology, law, and society from the University of California, Irvine. He earned his law degree from the University of Colorado, Boulder in 2016. He interned at the Colorado Public Defender's Office as well as in San Diego and Riverside. While in law school at UC Irvine, he worked in their criminal defense clinic where he took a vandalism case to jury trial.

Barraza knew even way back then that he was "meant to do criminal defense work" and he loves what he does. Because he loves it, it comes easy, and he stated that he heartily "enjoys representing blue collar people in my community."

Cutting his teeth as an attorney in the collaborative Riverside courts set the foundation for his stellar career. He said, "The attorneys I saw practicing are who I modeled myself on. Working with lawyers like Barbara Plate, Chris Oliver, and Monica Nguyen, made me the attorney I am today. I honed my skill set in mental health court."

Barraza epitomizes what it means to give back in his commitment to public service. He serves his community in so many ways and has been on the board of multiple organizations, including but not limited to, the Riverside County Bar Association, Asian Pacific American Lawyers of the Inland Empire, the Hispanic Bar Association of the Inland Empire, and Leo A. Deegan Inn of Court. He is especially proud of his time volunteering with the Riverside County Project Graduate Program which, in collaboration with the Riverside Superior Court and Riverside County's Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), helps to assist foster youth to graduate high school, and to continue their education beyond high school, and plan for a successful future.

In his private time, Barraza enjoys spending time with his wife, Ashley, and their gorgeous son, Oliver, as well as with his mom and brothers, and he is an avid fútbol fan.

Juanita E. Mantz is a Riverside County deputy public defender, writer, podcaster and performer. She specializes in representing clients in Penal Code section 1368 proceedings.

ATTENTION RCBA MEMBERS

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The RCBA Elves Program – Season XXV

by Brian C. Pearcy

Back in Christmas of 2023, we served a record number of families but we subsequently realized, that by focusing on growth, the amount that could be applied to each child was reduced, which also made it real challenging for our shopping elves. Also, we have also faced the limited staffing from Walmart in Moreno Valley, which made processing the volume of gifts complicated for them and the RCBA staff. As a result, in 2024 we tested a few changes with an eye for making improvements for the families, for our elves, and the bar staff. To accomplish those goals, we moved our shopping night to a Walmart where management was actively supporting our program with better staffing. We also tested a reduction in the number of families served, so we could focus on increasing the quality and amount of gifts to be provided for those we served. To help our elves and bar staff, we tried a few new things to streamline our shopping night, so everyone could get out of Walmart sooner. We also bumped up the start time for the Shopping Elves, to enable those that had the desire and the ability to get out to the store for a jump on shopping before the end of day crush of traffic, could do so. By all accounts, the changes we made were a success.

We will continue those test changes this year. We are excited to provide you, your staff, and all the family and friends of the RCBA community, our 25th opportunity to show your support and give back to the community that supports us.

Once again, the two big questions: How many Elf categories do you want to participate in this season and how many people can you recruit to help?

Shopping Elves: As a Shopping Elf, you will receive a Christmas "wish list" from your adopted families. Your job is simple—shop and fill your basket with as many gifts as possible within the dollar amount given to you at the start of the evening at our "check in" table located at the Walmart entrance. This is a real opportunity to test or show off your "value" shopping skills. Many of our Shopping Elves have made this a family affair using its younger members to assist in selecting the "cool" gifts for the kids while learning about the value of charity and the joy of giving to the less fortunate. Some law offices bring their entire staff and are joined by their families and make this a night of bonding. Whatever the motivation, please put on an Elf cap and come and join us. A good time will be had by all.

We will be shopping at the Walmart Supercenter at 1800 N Perris Blvd., in Perris. This year we will shop on Monday, December 7, 2026 starting at 2:00 p.m, with the goal of being finished by 7:30 p.m.

Like last year, to avoid gift "mix-ups" at check out and to assist our pre-processing the gifts for wrapping night, you will be provided a shopping list (with stickers) and individual bags for each family member you shop. This will allow you to separate the family member's items into his/her own bag as you shop. Separating the gifts helps to avoid mix-ups for the wrapping elves and to ensure the items you shopped for will actually make it to each recipient. We ask that every Shopping Elf process their shopping carts through the checkout queue to ensure the correct gifts stay in the correct recipient bag.

Since Walmart has provided us with more dedicated staff, we found this new process didn't add much time to your shopping day but did make the checkout faster and our preparation for the wrapping process flow went much smoother. We appreciate your support on this!

Wrapping Elves: After the Shopping Elves finish their job, Wrapping Elves swing into action. Wrapping Elves must ensure that all the gifts are tagged and assembled by family to allow for easy pick up and distribution by the Delivery Elves. This year the wrapping nights at the RCBA's boardroom will occur on Wednesday, December 9 and Thursday, December 10, starting at 3:30 p.m. on each day.

We had a tremendous turnout for wrapping at the RCBA last year, with music, food and camaraderie. As holiday music played and snacks and other goodies were consumed, a good time was had by all. Remember, excellent wrapping and organizational skills are welcomed, but are not required.

Delivery Elves: Over the years, many members have expressed that delivering gifts to the families was by far one of the most heart-warming Elf experiences. So, if you need a way to kick-start the warm holiday glow inside and out or just want to feel like Santa on Christmas Eve, this is it! It is also a good opportunity to teach your young ones early the rewarding feeling we get of helping those less fortunate than themselves. When signing up, please contact Lucy Velez-Garcia at lvelez-garcia@bpearcylaw.com, (951) 686-1584, to let us know how many families you can deliver to.



Judge Sunshine Sykes and daughter

Depending on the total number of families adopted, Delivery Elves will be able to personally deliver the wrapped gifts to each of our families from December 11 to 24. (You'll need to retrieve all gifts/bags from the RCBA offices by no

later than December 18). Please contact the RCBA office at (951) 682-1015 before you come to pick up your bags to ensure that your family(ies) gifts and bags are ready for delivery.

Money Elves: The Money Elves provide the means necessary for the other Elves to shop, wrap, and deliver presents to the families we adopt. Donations received will fund gifts purchased from Walmart, the purchase of gift cards from Stater Bros, so the families can buy food for a nice holiday dinner, and the purchase of gas cards so they can get to the grocery store. We are not starting off with a carry-over cushion from the prior year. That means we have to raise more money this year to get back on track. Please give generously and ask your friends and colleagues to do the same. The more money we raise and the earlier we raise it means a greater number of families we can assist.



Nolan Kistler

You can really help us by sending in your donation EARLY since it allows us to determine our budget for the number of families we help. The majority of funds need to be donated no later than December 4, to allow for the big shopping night, but late donations can still be used for the food and gas cards.

Please make your checks payable to the RCB Foundation and write "Elves Program" in the memo section of the check. The RCB Foundation is a 501(c)(3), so all donations for this project are tax deductible. The RCBA Foundation Tax ID# is 47-4971260. Please send your checks directly to the RCBA or you can deliver to them as well. We thank you in advance for your holiday generosity.

Please note, even if you are a procrastinator, we will accept money after December 12. Monies received this late will be applied to any last minute "add on" families or it will be saved to get us a head start on donations for next year.

To become a Shopping, Wrapping, Delivery, or Money Elf (or a combination of these), please email your name and desired Elf designation(s) to one of the following: Charlene Nelson (charlene@riversidecountybar.com) or Lisa Yang (lisa@riversidecountybar.com). They can also be reached at (951) 682-1015. Or you can contact Brian Pearcy (bpearcy@bpearcylaw.com), or his assistants, Lucy Velez-Garcia (lvelez-garcia@bpearcylaw.com) or Anna Gherity (agherity@bpearcylaw.com). You can also reach them at (951) 686-1584.

To those who have participated in the past, "Thank you" and to those who join us for the first time this year, we look forward to meeting you. Don't forget to tell a friend or two or three!

Brian C. Pearcy was president of the RCBA in 2002 and is the chairperson (i.e. "Head Elf") of the Elves Program.



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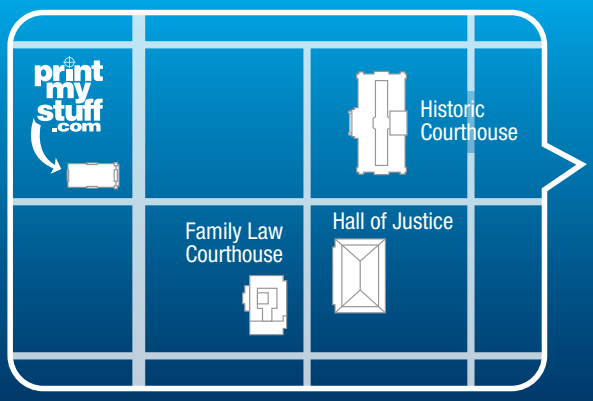
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Conference Rooms Available – RCBA Building

Conference rooms, small offices and the Gabbert Gallery meeting room at the RCBA building are available for rent on a half-day or full-day basis. Please call for pricing information, and reserve rooms in advance, by contacting Charlene or Lisa at the RCBA office, (951) 682-1015 or rcba@riversidecountybar.com.

Seeking Applications: Non-Attorney Merit Selection Panel Member

The United States District Court, Central District of California, is currently accepting applications from non-attorney individuals interested in serving on the Central District's Magistrate Judge Merit Selection Panel. This recruitment seeks to replace one Panel member position whose term will expire at the end of this year. The successful applicant will join the Magistrate Judge Merit Selection Panel effective January 1, 2027. Full information is available on the Court's website (www.cacd.uscourts.gov) under Notices from the Clerk in the Newsworthy section. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled..

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MEMBERSHIP

The following persons have applied for membership in the Riverside County Bar Association. If there are no objections, they will become members effective November 30, 2026.

Kristie L. Bergamo – Family Law Matters, Temecula
Lauren M. Bishop – Juvenile Defense Panel, Moreno Valley
Azucena Crespo – Lewis Brisbois, San Bernardino
Eugene Dokes – Law Student, Murrieta

Lawyer Referral Service
of the Riverside County Bar Association

Attorneys Needed: If you would like to be a panel member on the LRS, please call (951) 682-1015 for an application packet, or download it from our website, riversidecountybar.com (under Members menu, click on Applications & Documents).

State Bar of California Certification # 0038

Save the Date

Riverside County Bar Association
MCLE MARATHON
Webinar via Zoom

Friday, February 5, 2027
10 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

MCLE Credit: 4 Hours Total
(2 hour Ethics, 1 hour Implicit Bias, 1 hour Technology)

You may attend all or only the session(s) in which you need credits.
More info will be forthcoming.

CALENDAR

NOVEMBER

2 Civil Litigation Roundtable with Judge Harold Hopp
Noon – Zoom
MCLE

11 Veterans Day Holiday
RCBA Office Closed

13 General Membership Meeting
Noon – RCBA Gabbert Gallery
Speakers: Steve Harmon and Mike Hestrin
Topic: "Civility, Accountability and Morality"
MCLE: .5 Civility/.5 General

17 Family Law Section Meeting
Noon, RCBA Gabbert Gallery
Speaker: Judge John Vineyard, Judge Cheryl Murphy, Judge Mona Nemat, Commissioner Matthew Forsse (other Bench Officers may be added)
Topic: Townhall Discussion with the Family Law Bench
MCLE

26-27 Thanksgiving Holiday
RCBA Office Closed

DECEMBER

7 Roundtable with Judge Hopp
12:15 PM, Zoom
MCLE

7 Elves Shopping Night
2:00 PM – 7:30 PM
Walmart
1800 N. Perris Blvd.
Perris 92570

9 Elves Wrapping Night #1
3:30 PM – 7:30 PM
RCBA Boardroom

10 Elves Wrapping Night #2
3:30 PM – 7:30 PM
RCBA Boardroom

11-24 Elves Deliveries
(Gifts to be picked up by Dec. 18)

25 Christmas Holiday
RCBA Office Closed

SAVE THE DATE –
MCLE MARATHON
(FOUR HOURS SPECIALTY CREDITS)
Friday, February 5, 2027
Zoom

Events Subject To Change
For the latest calendar information please visit the RCBA's website at **riversidecountybar.com**

The Riverside Lawyer is published 11 times per year by the Riverside County Bar Association (RCBA) and is distributed to RCBA members, Riverside County judges and administrative officers of the court, community leaders and others interested in the advancement of law and justice. Advertising and announcements are due by the 6th day of the month preceding publications (e.g., October 6 for the November issue). Articles are due no later than 45 days preceding publication. All articles are subject to editing. RCBA members receive a subscription automatically. Annual subscriptions are $30.00 and single copies are $3.50.

Submission of articles and photographs to Riverside Lawyer will be deemed to be authorization and license by the author to publish the material in the *Riverside Lawyer*. The material printed in the *Riverside Lawyer* does not necessarily reflect the opinions of the RCBA, the editorial staff, the Publication Committee, or other columnists. Legal issues are not discussed for the purpose of answering specific questions. Independent research of all issues is strongly encouraged.

MISSION STATEMENT

Established in 1894

The Riverside County Bar Association, established in 1894 to foster social interaction between the bench and bar, is a professional organization that provides continuing education and offers an arena to resolve various problems that face the justice system and attorneys practicing in Riverside County.

RCBA Statement

The mission of the Riverside County Bar Association is: To serve our members, our communities, and our legal system.

Membership Benefits

Involvement in a variety of legal entities: Lawyer Referral Service (LRS), Riverside Legal Aid, Fee Arbitration, Dispute Resolution Service (DRS), Barristers, Leo A. Deegan Inn of Court, Mock Trial, State Bar Conference of Delegates, Bridging the Gap, the RCBA - Riverside Superior Court New Attorney Academy and the Riverside Bar Foundation.

Membership meetings monthly (except July and August) with keynote speakers, and participation in the many committees and sections.

Eleven issues of *Riverside Lawyer* published each year to update you on State Bar matters, ABA issues, local court rules, open forum for communication, and timely business matters.

Social gatherings throughout the year: Installation of RCBA and Barristers Officers dinner, Law Day activities, Good Citizenship Award ceremony for Riverside County high schools, Reading Day and other special activities, Continuing Legal Education brown bag lunches and section workshops. RCBA is a certified provider for MCLE programs.



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