

President's Message

by Robert J. DeSousa



Younger Lawyers and the Federal Bar Association

The Federal Bar Association does a great job of bringing to our members themed issues of *The Federal Lawyer*, and this one is no exception. The issues relating to being a young lawyer are particularly important not only because we have such a vibrant and exciting Young Lawyers Division, but also because it has never been more important for young lawyers and law students to belong to the Federal Bar Association.

In today's highly competitive market, law school graduates struggle to find the right job. It has been reported that while 82 percent of graduates had secured *some form of employment* within nine months of graduating, only 56 percent had secured long-term, full-time jobs that required bar passage. And 12 percent of graduates remain unemployed nine months after earning their degree, an increase of 1 percent since 2012.

What does this mean for FBA members? First and foremost, those of us who are well beyond the young lawyer stage have an obligation to advise young lawyers and law students that joining the FBA is not only fun, interesting and rewarding, but also career enhancing. With competition so fierce, joining the FBA and volunteering with our many programs enables them to meet people, show leadership skills and develop the ability to market oneself.

Members know that the FBA is a vibrant and flexible organization. Young lawyers and law students receive many opportunities to excel. At two recent FBA functions—our Indian Law Conference and our Moot Court Competition—the Judge Advocate General's (JAG) Corps of several military branches sent recruiters even though they have very, *very* few opportunities available. Why would they send a recruiter when they are

being flooded with applications? The answer is simple. The JAG Corps, as just one example, recognizes the value of participation in associations like the FBA.

The association continues to grow toward our goal of 20,000 members by 2020, our 100th anniversary. Our biggest growth area is in law students and younger lawyers. This is promising both for what the FBA gets out of these dynamic new members, but also for what they gain out of membership.

I encourage all FBA members to look around to their associates, friends in law school, and younger lawyer acquaintances.. Offer them a hand up by suggesting they join the FBA and that they volunteer to be active. All they have to do is go to www.fedbar.org to sign up online! At a minimum, suggest they follow us on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn to keep abreast of all that we offer—and if they have saved their pennies, suggest they join us in San Juan this September for our annual convention! ☺



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