

President's Message

by Hon. Gustavo A. Gelpí



The Federal Bar Association Is for All

It is an honor to address the membership of the

Federal Bar Association as your national president. I have been an FBA member for more than 20 years and consider it one of the most important steps of my professional development.

I have had the privilege of serving the FBA at the national and chapter levels, both as an attorney, and, subsequently, as a judge. In both capacities, but particularly the latter, I have come to appreciate the many services and benefits the FBA lends to its members: CLE sessions, luncheons with distinguished speakers, bench-bar conferences and events, as well as this publication and a myriad of chapter and section newsletters, plus our recently created e-newsletter and updated web site, Facebook pages, and Twitter feed. These are just some of the exiting things our members can expect on a regular basis.

More importantly, the FBA offers each and every member a unique opportunity to network and connect with other members locally and nationally. Via participation in national FBA events or membership in our many sections and divisions, an intellectual property attorney member from Hawaii, for example, can get to know and work with colleagues from across the United States, all the way over to Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

As an organization comprising more than 16,500 attorneys and federal judges nationwide, the FBA offers much more than just the opportunity to work and communicate with one's peers in a given area of law. While areas of practice and specialty may vary, we all strive toward a common goal, as our mission statement provides: "to strengthen the federal legal system and administration of justice by serving the interests and the needs of the federal practitioner, both public and private, the federal judiciary and the public they serve."

Our national board includes volunteer men and women from all walks of the legal spectrum. For example, the board's membership of leaders who serve or have served as federal and tribal judges, plaintiff and defense trial lawyers, federal defenders and prosecutors, and law professors, just to mention a few, mirrors the leadership at our numerous chapters, sections, and divisions.

This truly makes us an all-inclusive group, unlike other specialty bar organizations. Recently, for example, I have been working closely on a series of projects with our incoming national treasurer, Mark Vincent, an assistant U.S. attorney from Salt Lake City, and Geoff Chesire, an assistant federal defender from Tucson. Whatever different roles we play in the criminal justice system on a daily basis, at the FBA we each bring a unique experience and vision for the common good of the constitutional and legal system we all believe in. I thus urge all our members from the private and public sectors to become more involved in the many facets of our organization.

As the first Article III judicial officer to assume the national presidency of the FBA, I cannot conclude without noting the multiple accolades about our association that I have received from my fellow federal judges nationwide. This makes me more committed and more proud to be an FBA member. I also hope this paves the way for other judges to hold leadership positions in the FBA. ☉

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'G. Gelpi'.

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