

President's Message

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Increasing Visibility, Relevance, and Value

IN PREPARING MY first message as your Association's President, I reflected on the vision of the Federal Bar Association. Our vision statement purports that the FBA be recognized as the "premier bar association serving the federal practitioner and judiciary." In order to

realize the vision, the national officers and Board of Directors are committed to increasing the association's visibility, relevance, and value—what I refer to as "VRV"!

Last March, before the midyear meeting, your officers met in what's called the "Presidential Summit," which has been meeting annually for the past 10 years. At this 10th Presidential Summit, President Lawrence Baca, myself as president-elect, Treasurer Fern Bomchill, and Executive Director Jack Lockridge met for two days, discussing the critical issues facing our FBA and how your Association can better serve its members, chapters, sections, divisions, and judges. The theme that resonated most is that we are a voluntary bar association that is value-driven. We discussed the value of FBA membership and why each of us first joined our chapters. We shared our reasons for seeking leadership positions—first in our chapters and later at the national level. At the Presidential Summit, your officers agreed on an initiative that will span the next three to five years. We are dedicated to increasing the FBA's "VRV"—visibility, relevance, and value.

Visibility and relevance are integral parts of growing and solidifying the FBA as the premier bar association serving federal practitioners and the judiciary. As part of our mission to increase VRV, your officers and directors will question how everything we do benefits the value of FBA membership.

Your national leadership asks each member and chapter leader to serve as an FBA ambassador. Share with your colleagues, and particularly younger lawyers, your enthusiasm for the FBA. Think about why you joined the FBA and why you value your membership. Then, challenge yourself and others in your Chapter, Sections, and Divisions to share that enthusiasm with potential new members of the Association.

The FBA is relevant because it serves as the national representative of federal legal practitioners. We consist of more than 15,000 federal lawyers, including 1,300 federal judges, who work together to promote the sound administration of justice and

integrity, quality, and independence of the judiciary. The FBA provides opportunities for scholarship and for judges and lawyers to professionally and socially interact. Our Government Relations Committee monitors and often advocates on federal issues that impact the practice of federal lawyers and the courts and keeps our members abreast of current federal issues. The FBA also promotes high standards of professional competence and ethical conduct.

The FBA's relevance is perhaps best demonstrated by its sponsorship of important "Bench and Bar" events, continuing legal education, and social events. These events focus on issues that are relevant to federal practitioners and the judiciary and provide an important bridge between federal judges and the attorneys who practice before them. Being a member of the FBA provides the opportunity for an ongoing dialogue between the federal bench and bar as well as networking opportunities for practitioners.

The FBA is dedicated to the preservation of judicial independence, adequate funding and facilities for the federal courts, sufficient numbers of federal judgeships, equitable compensation for the federal judiciary, fairness and consistency in federal sentencing, and a host of other matters.

I liken the task of achieving VRV to the job of a football team. That may be because I am from the city of the 2010 Super Bowl champions, the New Orleans Saints. To become the Super Bowl XLIV champions, the New Orleans Saints needed all the components: a good offense, a great defense, high-performance special teams, and a coach to provide the necessary leadership. Similarly, all of the segments of the FBA—the Chapters, the Sections and Divisions, the Vice Presidents of the Circuits, and your Officers and Directors—must work together to make the FBA the country's national bar association champion. I challenge you to join us on this scoring drive!



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