



CROSSTALK

Central Florida Chapter Association of Legal Administrators

April—June 2018



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



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***Please see page 8 for the Newsletter Riddle**

Do you **automagic**? The Atlas Society explains the objectivist view of the art of magic as an action that aims to produce effects that appear to be impossible by the laws of logic and nature. In the Greco-Roman world [Magic] was viewed as "any attempt to control the environment or the self by means that are either untested or untestable..." (Swatos). The same art of magic applies to our roles in the law firms when we as an Administrator, Office Manager, CEO, HR Manager, Operations or Facilities Manager often achieve an extraordinary success in facing challenges that come with change by turning an impossible thing into a possible one thus **creating magic**.

I chose for the chapter theme "Creating Magic" not only for how it fits in our roles at our firms but how it also fits in our roles as members of our Chapter. The topic of Succession and Strategic Planning is on everyone's mind in some shape or form. The high percentage of partners nearing retirement is a common one across the industry and so is the percentage of our members who will be retiring in the not so distant future. Our Board is embracing this **inevitable change**. We are working on finding ways to get results on the challenges that are ahead of us with succession and strategic planning that works.

The Board is developing new goals that combine tradition and new ideas. Our organization's mission remains the same, to understand our members' needs and empower our members by looking at the future of the organization with **fresh ideas**. I feel incredibly fortunate to be serving as the Chapter President with highly talented officers and committee chairs. They show up at each meeting with innovative solutions, recognition and branding ideas, strategic goals, and most importantly, making membership a good decision.

Hope you have enjoyed so far our roundtable discussion on e-Billing and Audits, Technology, Inclusion of Women Partners, and Succession Planning as well as our other presentations on Deciphering Hidden Messages and Implicit Bias struggles in the law firms.

More to come are Retirement Planning, The Active Shooter including mental health in the workplace, and Moneyball for Lawyers. And don't forget about our focus groups in where you will be a part of in depth discussions on topics like "You can't teach someone something they think they already know," "Understanding the difference without overgeneralization of culture, religion, and/or disability," "When asking a question, it has to be asked correctly" and "Willing to fail but unwilling to quit." It is my wish to convince you to **re-engage** with us if you have not been to a meeting in a while. We need your presence and your expertise as seasoned Administrators. Not a member but thinking about becoming one, don't wait, reach out to our extraordinary membership committee and ask them "Why is membership a good decision?" Let's shift our paradigm from cost to value and from clickage to building relationships.

With deepest sincerity,

Michelle Gerena



WORKSCAPES DELIVERS

Our amazing 'Rosie Jetson' aka Jillian McCluskey with Workscapes is delivering the custom ordered Herman Miller chair to Rose Hutchinson who won it at the BP Expo!

Thank you to our Business Partners who donate such great prizes to our Chapter!

ENHANCING YOUR MARKETABILITY

BY: KIM HOCHSTETLER, DIRECTORY OF STAFFING, SUITSON STAFFING

In order to equip candidates, either unemployed or looking for a change, with the ability to make themselves marketable and target the right work environment for their career goals, one must have a strategy. Implement your strategy by mapping out your career plan, aligning your values and executing your plan. With the everchanging world we live in, Steven Covey says it best, "there are three constants in life: change, choice and principles." In his book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, the core to a principal-centered life revolves around such habits as being proactive, beginning with the end in mind, putting things first and thinking win/win, to name a few. Focusing on these habits, builds the foundation of moving from dependence to interdependence!

Identifying your goals-immediate, short and long term from the onset, will move you in the right direction. If you are unable to relay your goals, you will, most likely jump from job to job without a clear career path. Ask yourself why you chose the career path you chose; does it align with your values or personal objectives and how does this enhance your growth and development. Once you have found your purpose, how does the company's why align with what is important to you? What are their values, mission and vision? By being proactive and understanding how a company works, how their core competencies attract qualified and highly efficient candidates and understanding the compensation strategy of the company by adjusting your expectation to your target, will only bring value to their team.

Executing the strategy to appeal to your target companies builds a successful career search. Use several different job boards, research company websites to determine open position expectations, leverage recruiters when you can, to help market and negotiate for you and spend time on building a comprehensive, clear and goal-oriented resume, highlighting transferrable skills and update dates of employment. Next, ace the interview. Use what you learned from your research, know and understand the job description, ask legitimate questions - you are interviewing the company too! Dress business professional no matter how casual or "hip" the office may appear. This means covering tattoos and taking out facial piercings. Be early and prepared for any evaluations that may be required. Take time to develop yourself both personally and professionally so your potential target employer will want you as part of their organization, but more importantly will act swiftly to get you!

Implementing, aligning and execution are all part of making oneself marketable in a rapidly changing job market. This will help you bring value to companies through understanding your needs, desires and offerings by creating a healthy and happy career choice.



TRIVIA NIGHT

It's that time again! We are so excited to invite you to our 2nd Annual Trivia Night! This year we will be hosting our trivia night at 310 Lakeside on Thursday, August 16th at 5:30 PM. The ticket price includes delicious catered food by 310 Lakeside and an open bar! Register now - Seating is limited

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Connection this year involves working with Up Orlando, an organization whose mission is "to serve those in poverty by providing crisis care, case management, transformative education, food and household subsidy, employment training and placement, personal empowerment training and active referrals to other collaborative social service providers." Specific details on how CFCALA plans to help this wonderful organization will be coming shortly. Stay tuned for how you can help!

NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Bertha Burruezo
Law Firm: Burruezo & Burruezo, PLLC
Title: Managing Shareholder
Location: Orlando
www.burruezolaw.com

We're getting to know you.....

If you could live anywhere, where would it be? 1) California, 2) Bali, 3) Spain

What is your proudest accomplishment? Getting my J.D., notwithstanding the many challenges I faced.

What is your favorite thing about your career? Being able to practice with my husband, who is a fellow lawyer.

What is the best advice you have ever heard? "Let it Go."

Your favorite quote? "The only way out, is through."

What was the most daring thing you have ever done?
Opening my own firm.

If you could have lunch with anyone, who would it be?
The Notorious RBG.

UPCOMING EVENTS

July 25 – 11:30 a.m. Luncheon at the Citrus Club – Speaker: ALA National Conference Attendees will be speaking on ALA Hot Topics

August 15 – Webinar at Dellecker Wilson King McKenna Ruffier & Sos on "Slicing, Dicing & Pricing: The Evolution of Law Firm Analytics

August 16 – 5:30 p.m. – Trivia Night at 310 Lakeside

August 29 – 11:30 a.m. Luncheon at the Citrus Club – Justin Jacobs, Financial Advisor at Morgan Stanley will be speaking on Retirement Planning

September 26 – 11:30 a.m. Luncheon at the Citrus Club – Speaker: Rafael Torres will be speaking on Workplace Violence and Active Shooter

FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

Small Firm Group (Firms with less than 50 total employees)

Held on 3rd Tuesdays
Hosted by Robin Neill at Decker
Scheduled upcoming dates
7/17/18, 10/16/18, 01/15/19

HR Focus Group

Held on 1st Wednesdays (unless it conflicts with Chapter Board Meetings)
Hosted by Katie Shaw at Zimmerman
Scheduled upcoming dates
8/9/2018, 11/07/2018, 2/7/2019

Mid-Large Firm Group (Firms with more than 50 total employees)

Held on 1st Thursdays
Hosted by Patricia Chin at Grower
Scheduled upcoming dates –
9/6/2018, 12/06/2018, 03/07/2019

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

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Diversity efforts are changing. Initially, those efforts focused on recruiting. An organization's diversity goal was for its membership to reflect differing ethnicity, gender, color, age, race, religion, disability, national origin and sexual orientation. Disappointing retention statistics have challenged this approach. What is missing? Individuals do not stay involved, engaged and committed without being included in the day to day work of the organization. As a result, many organizations have shifted their strategy to inclusion. Inclusion is a state of being valued, respected and supported. It is understanding the needs of each member to ensure the right conditions exist in the organization for that person to reach full potential. Inclusion should be written into every aspect of an organization and reflected its culture, practices and relationships. Inclusion is not just a program. Inclusion requires personal effort.

Why is it so difficult to create an environment that promotes involvement and engagement of individuals different than you? It's natural. It is human nature to gravitate to individuals who are the same as you. It is our short cut for interacting with the world. In order to overcome this bias, you must consciously make choices that challenge your biases and develop colleagues who are willing to gently point out when those biases impact your decision making. You can improve your own inclusion efforts. Try these activities:

- Speak with people in the room with whom no one else is interacting. Sit next to someone you don't know. When doing so, introduce yourself and engage in conversation.
- Listen attentively to those who are different from you. What perspectives do they have, different from yours, which help you understand a person, situation or opinion differently?
- Respectfully ask questions to understand diverse opinions/viewpoints. Educate yourself about these different perspectives.
- Notice how diverse the people are who surround you personally and professionally. Take steps to broaden that diversity with exposure to different cultures, backgrounds and experiences.
- Become aware of your own unconscious bias by taking one or more of the confidential Harvard Implicit Association tests at <http://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>

In an increasingly diverse world, successful leaders must manage and leverage the differences within their organizations to develop an inclusive environment. As a chapter leader, you can begin the conversation to promote inclusion. Gather chapter leaders and ask these questions suggested by Dr. Arin N. Reeves:

What happens if you, individually or organizationally, are not more inclusive? What hurts if nothing changes? What critical or amazing opportunity is not accessible to you if nothing changes? If you are having trouble answering these questions, you have just hit the wall that stands between your inclusion efforts and your inclusion results. Ask the above questions of different people in your organization and see what you can learn from the responses.

Or as Steve L. Robbins suggests in *What If? Short Stories to Spark Diversity Dialog*, ask these questions:

Who has survived and flourished in your organization?

Exercise: Ask participants to identify five or six cultural characteristics of the organization and how they contribute to a healthy or unhealthy environment. What new "fish" might be entering your pond soon? What conditions are necessary for them to flourish? Work together to identify the elements needed for

your new and improved organizational “pond.” Determine action steps, and then do them!

Assignment: Identify ONE deficit in your organization that you can begin addressing immediately.

While these questions can spark conversation, there are also structural steps leadership can take to increase inclusion. Dr. David K. Rehr and James Zaniello, FASAE in Diversity and Inclusion Core Values Among Associations suggest three steps:

1. Do you and your leadership currently demonstrate a commitment to diversity and Inclusion by:
 - Regularly including diversity topics at meetings
 - Offering mentoring programs
 - Leadership being personally involved in diversity training
 - Leadership managing by example
 - Dedicating resources
 - Recognition of diversity champions
 - Community involvement and outreach

2. Is there an expressed commitment to diversity and inclusion for your organization in:
 - The mission statement
 - Your website
 - Strategic plan
 - Organizational core values
 - Succession planning

3. Do you currently have a diversity and inclusion strategy for:
 - Recruitment
 - Onboarding
 - Retention
 - Development
 - Leadership

Whether your chapter has 10 or 300 members, these steps apply. Modify as needed to fit your chapter’s needs.

The ALA Committee on Diversity and Inclusion has a presentation titled Creating a Culturally Competent Law Firm. It may be a starting point for a conversation on inclusion in your chapter. Don’t have a diversity committee? Start one! For more information, visit our webpage: <http://www.alanet.org/about/diversity>

Authors:

Mariel E. Piilola, J.D. is Director of Administration of Larkin Hoffman in Bloomington, Minnesota; an active member of ALA, and Chair of its Committee on Diversity & Inclusion.

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ASSOCIATION OF LEGAL ADMINISTRATORS ANTI-TRUST GUIDE

The following is the link to the Association of Legal Administrators Anti-Trust Guide:

<https://www.alanet.org/docs/default-source/governance-documents/antitrust-guide.pdf>

NATIONAL CONFERENCE UPDATE

BY: KATIE SHAW

Learning. Bonding. Networking. Mind-blowing!

It is difficult to express what ALA National Conference gave to me. As a first time attendee I had no idea what to expect; I could not have been prepared for all of the amazing things I would take away. Three days packed full of learning from incredible speakers. The level of quality that National ALA is able to attract in its speakers is unbelievable. I left each session feeling enlightened with knowledge that was directly applicable to my position and easily transferrable to my firm. The keynote speakers left me inspired and encouraged. Each one pushing me to want more from myself and opening my mind to more and more possibilities.

The ALA National Conference brings together members and business partners from around the world. I was able to meet with law firm administrators and HR Managers everywhere from Tennessee to Australia. The networking events are welcoming and easily allow for everyone to immediately feel connected. The first time attendee breakfast was a great ice breaker on the first day of sessions where we got to mingle with other first time attendees and National ALA Board Members. Not only does the Conference have preplanned networking events, but business partners of ALA put on their own networking events allowing you to continue to grow and solidify your BP relationships.

The education was top notch, the networking was a blast, but the best part was the bonding with our chapter members. Our President, Michelle, took the time and effort to ensure that we would get loads of time together, strengthening our relationships, fostering new relationships and creating memories. I learned more in four days (and nights 😊) of conference about the eight other remarkable chapter members that attended with me than I have in the three years that I have been a member.

I returned home energized, excited, enlightened and honestly – tired! However, I would recommend this experience to every member of the chapter both old and new. I grew as a professional and most importantly as a person and I look forward to many more years of growing with this organization!



Back Row: Michelle Gerena, Kim Novak, Stephanie Donaldson
Front Row: Sharon Owen, Sheila Sullivan, Katie Shaw, Robin Neill
Lower Left Corner: Rose Hutchinson

CFCALA AWARDS SCHOLARSHIP TO ELEVATE ORLANDO STUDENT

BY: RAY HEROD



Jonas Cayo and Claudel Dera

CFCALA has a long history of awarding educational scholarships. For more than twenty years educational scholarships have been given to a family member from one of our chapter-member law firms. Several years ago that scholarship was named in honor of Lynn Wolfe, one of our former members who so championed the value of education. This year, in an idea inspired by our new President Michelle Gerena, the chapter is awarding a scholarship to a high school student in our community who has demonstrated excellence in the classroom while overcoming personal or other challenges. To help us in this endeavor, CFCALA partnered with local non-profit ELEVATE Orlando.

ELEVATE Orlando is an award winning program that is housed in three local high schools (Evans, Jones, and Oak Ridge) as well as the middle schools and elementary schools that feed into those high schools. Many of the children and teens that ELEVATE serves come from broken or abusive homes, struggling communities and high-risk neighborhoods. ELEVATE Orlando provides these youth with positive adult mentors who guide them toward personal growth and achievement throughout their high school careers. ELEVATE focuses efforts on young adults at one of the most pivotal points of their lives: high school. Intervening at this age allows the Teacher/Mentors to create positive impacts that can last a lifetime. ELEVATE is more than just an after-school program. It is an educational partnership that includes school-approved curriculums and mentorships that extend far beyond the classroom for children and teenagers who need it most.

Most importantly ELEVATE works! There are more than 1250 urban youths involved each week. 97% of ELEVATE students graduate high school and 95% are placed in colleges, vocational training or the military. Those are amazing statistics considering the community and family challenges that many of these students have experienced.

This year's scholarship winner is Claudel Dera of Oak Ridge High School. Claudel played football at Oak Ridge for three years but his passion is music. He plays six different instruments and is often asked to accompany touring artists from his native country of Haiti when they play in Orlando. This fall Claudel will be attending Southeastern University in Lakeland. His experience in ELEVATE could be described as a life-altering as well as life-saving experience. Since becoming an ELEVATE student, Claudel has also served as a middle school ELEVATE mentor, passing on the life skills he has learned through the program to those coming behind him. Claudel will be our guest at the June 27th chapter meeting along with his mentor, Jonas Cayo. At that time they will have the opportunity to tell us more about Claudel's personal journey and the ELEVATE program.

MENTOR MAGIC!

BY: MELLISSA WATERS

When a new member joins the Chapter, the Membership Committee will assign a "mentor" to the new member who will provide guidance to the new member for a minimum of six (6) months, although continuing contact throughout their first year is a nice plus. The committee will strive to match mentors with new members in similar firms (size, practice area, location) and in similar positions (HR, Administrators) whenever possible. We ask that mentors provide guidance and support to new members by reaching out to them for a casual lunch, drink or coffee, attend quarterly new member/mentor lunches, encourage attendance at meetings, events, focus groups and educational opportunities and generally welcome and familiarize the new member with all CFCALA has to offer them! Remember all the great things your mentor did for you when you joined CFCALA? Won't you return the favor and mentor a new member this year? If you are interested in acting as a mentor for a new member, please reach out to Mellissa Waters at mwaters@shuffieldlowman.com.

NEWSLETTER RIDDLE

First person to respond to contest@cfcala.org with the correct answer will receive a \$5 Starbucks gift card. Please include your name and firm name in the email.

We enter it at birth.
We pass through it in life.
We exit it at death.
It was our preparation for eternity.

The answer is.....

TIME-OFF

BY: DAWN BETANCOURT

Policies regarding time off seem to be changing, traditional two weeks' vacation and eight fixed holidays are not the norm any longer. Companies are rethinking how they need to change in order to keep staff happy. In fact, a third of organizations last year increased their overall benefits, according to the 2017 Employee Benefits research report provided by SHRM.

Companies are recognizing that offering flexibility, keeps employees more engaged, productive, and willing to stick around. Another fact is people on average stay in jobs for 18-36 months, therefore no longer hitting the tenure level and most potential employees find that standard a turn off. Some would say, this is Millennials in the workforce, but it's more accurate to say all generations are welcoming this balance between work and personal time.

It may be time to reflect on your internal policies in order to stay marketable in the workforce.



2018-2019 EXECUTIVE BOARD

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COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Business Partner Chair:

Business Partner Support:

Membership:

Education (including socials):

Webinars:

Communication:

Social Media, Photography & Website

Focus Groups:

Scholarships:

Survey:

President's Council:

Nominating Committee:

Community Connection:

Diversity:

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Patricia Chin and Lenita McFeron

Sheila Sullivan, Mellissa Waters

Lisa Marcum, Allyson Bisland, Mellissa Lambert

Lori Turnage

Debbie Wittig, Dawn Betancourt and Carla Farr

Robin Neill and Carla Farr

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