

# President's Forum

Volume 2, Issue 3  
Summer 2009



## President's Message — NCBP Plans an Informative, Dynamic Annual Meeting in Chicago



**M. Joe Crosthwait**

The National Conference of Bar Presidents (NCBP) annual meeting will be held in Chicago on July 31 and August 1, 2009, in collaboration with our sister organizations the National Association of Bar Executives (NABE) and the National Conference of Bar Foundations (NCBF). This conference promises to be yet another dynamic, informative, and inspirational series of programs and dialogues about the ever mutating and evolving challenges and opportunities bar leaders face. President-elect Mary Torres and the program committee together with the inestimable contribution by Roseanne Lucianek, director of the ABA Division of Bar Services, have done a truly outstanding job planning this program.

In recognition of the fact that this is the bicentennial of the year of Lincoln's birth and that we are meeting in Illinois, the opening plenary session on Friday morning is Abraham Lincoln — Lawyer, Leader, and President presented by Daniel Stowe who is director and editor of *The Papers of Abraham Lincoln*. Following that, one of the workshops will explore Lincoln's philosophy of the law which promises to provide important insight to this historically crucial president.

Over these two days there will be programming on subjects as varied as social media for those who are Twitter-challenged, to outstanding diversity projects, to how to continue providing valuable service to bar members in these difficult economic times. There also will be a workshop about leading your bar through, or maybe around, controversies. And there will be discussion of the evolving global legal practice, how it is affecting bars and how bars can affect it.

On Friday afternoon there will be a state bar roundtable discussion, while metropolitan bar leaders attend a plenary session conducted by the Metropolitan Bar Caucus.

*Continued on page 2*

## ABA President Wells Addresses Bar Leaders at Diversity Summit in D.C.

Unless the legal profession ratchets up its success in achieving diversity, society will look somewhere else for its leaders, American Bar Association President H. Thomas Wells Jr. told guests at his "National Summit on Diversity in the Legal Profession: The Next Steps?" held recently in Maryland.

"Marching in place can sometimes equate to falling behind. Let us not allow the genuine advances we have made to cause us to succumb to diversity fatigue," he urged. Wells convened the summit to reenergize the legal profession's efforts for inclusion by expanding outreach to persons with disabilities and persons of varying sexual orientations and gender identities as part of a campaign for a more representative bar.

Kareem Dale, special assistant to President Barack Obama for disabilities policy, heralded a new awareness of diversity issues as the nation has its first African American president, and has seen nomination of Judge Sonia Sotomayor, potentially the first Latina to serve on the United States Supreme Court. Dale cited a wide range of appointees, both to White House staff and in widespread government positions, as evidence of a renewed commitment to enforcement of rights for all people, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion or other factors. In his own special capacity, said Dale, "our goal is to make sure there is integration and inclusion for all people with disabilities."

*Continued on page 2*

### Dates and Deadlines

Mid-Atlantic Bar Conference Meeting

October 1-3, 2009  
Washington, DC

**Contact:** Katherine Mazzaferri  
(202) 737-4100, ext. 220

Southern Conference of Bar Presidents Meeting  
October 8-11, 2009  
Kansas City, MO

**Contact:** Jeff Alderman  
(785) 234-5696

New England Bar Association Meeting

October 22-24, 2009  
Newport, RI

Newport Marriott Hotel  
**Contact:** Helen Desmond McDonald  
(401) 421-5740

### Contact Information

*President's Forum* promotes communication among members of the National Conference of Bar Presidents. All members are invited to send information on their bar's activities to:

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**NCBP Web site**

[www.ncbp.org](http://www.ncbp.org)

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## President's Message

*Continued from page 1*

We will also continue the very popular tradition of breakfast roundtable discussions on Saturday morning after which we will hear from ABA President-elect Carolyn Lamm. Later, we will be informed and entertained by the inimitable Michael Rubin, past president of the Louisiana State Bar Association and a past member of the NCBP Executive Council.

And of course, throughout the conference, we will have occasion for the most quintessential form of social networking--real people talking to real people and having real fun in each other's real presence! Call it Face-Look! This will include the Metropolitan Bar Caucus Welcome Reception on Thursday evening and the NCBP/NABE/NCBF Joint Reception Friday evening at the Chicago History Museum which is sponsored by LexisNexis/Martindale-Hubbell with support from the Illinois State Bar Association.

As a matter of personal privilege, I wish to express my most sincere appreciation to and great fondness for the members of the Executive Council and officers of the NCBP with whom I have had the extraordinary personal and professional privilege to serve for the past eight years. And on behalf of all who have benefited from the NCBP's efforts, I express our profound gratitude to the wonderfully gifted and dedicated members of the Division for Bar Services staff without whom the NCBP would be little more than a good idea.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve for these years on the council, as an officer and for this year as your president. I so much appreciate the experiences and the opportunities to contribute. And I truly cherish the many friendships this good fortune has allowed me. It has been a great ride!

I'll see you in Chicago! Really!

## Diversity Summit

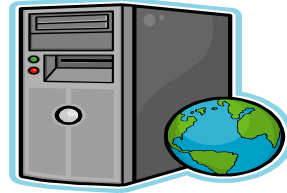
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factors. In his own special capacity, said Dale, "our goal is to make sure there is integration and inclusion for all people with disabilities."

ABA President-Elect Carolyn Lamm, who is also past president of the District of Columbia Bar, encouraged attendees to identify practical steps moving forward, and pledged to implement them, saying crafting achievable plans will benefit society, as well as the profession.

"We have left out so many people who we want at the table," said Irene Recio, an immigration lawyer from Richmond, Va., challenging attendees to recognize and remember why diverse groups should be there. Her firm has offices worldwide, she noted, and the laws and culture in some nations conflict with diversity goals.

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"Diversity proponents must find ways to address those conflicts," she said.

Linda Crump, past president of the Nebraska State Bar Association and assistant to the chancellor of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for equity, access and diversity programs, urged attendees to remember "what it feels like to actually be excluded," and to foster discussion of the impact of exclusion as a step toward inclusion.

The ABA will hold a hearing on issues facing LGBT lawyers during its annual meeting in July. Sponsored by the ABA Commission on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, the hearing will convene from 8:30 a.m. until noon, on Friday, July 31, in the InterContinental Hotel, Seville Ballroom West, Lobby Level. "The Gay Bar: LGBT Attorneys in the Profession" will feature testimony of lawyers who have faced discrimination by employers, judges and others.