



Douglas S. Brown is the executive director of the Connecticut Bar Association. Prior to his time at the CBA, Attorney Brown practiced law with Tyler Cooper & Alcorn; served as in-house counsel and then as a business executive with a global logistics company; and most recently served as a consultant and executive coach. He continues to teach strategy, leadership, and innovation at The Malcolm Baldrige School of Business at Post University.

Millions of Americans use the turning of a new year to evaluate accomplishments and set new goals. Even those who have sworn-off New Year's resolutions will often admit that this is a good time to reflect and consider the future.

The CBA had a successful year in 2016. As I travel to lawyer gatherings throughout our state, I continue to hear very positive feedback from our members on the energy and direction of our association. We look forward to an even better future in 2017 and beyond with continued growth and an even more engaged and vibrant membership working collaboratively in advocacy, service, and education.

Here is a sampling of what you can expect from us in the coming year to help you thrive as members in times of change.

Education on your terms

We will make our top notch, best in class educational programs accessible online

Investing in Our Future

for those who find it difficult to attend our in-person seminars either because of distance or time challenges. We took our first step in 2016 by recording more programs and making them available online in our CLE On-Demand marketplace. With the advent of the new Connecticut Minimum Continuing Legal Education (CT MCLE), we decided to take the next step and invest in your future by providing a robust, integrated online learning management system, called the Education Portal, to make online interaction more user-friendly and responsive to your needs.

This means that in January you will be able to log on to the Education Portal via our website and access 24/7 on-demand libraries of educational content from your home, office, or mobile device. This will allow you to earn credits and have them automatically recorded in your new online professional development journal. CBA members will be able to meet their CT MCLE requirements at **no additional cost** with our **complimentary on-demand CLE**.

Certainty is important in times of change. We do not want our members to wonder or worry about whether a program will be a good use of their time or will satisfy the rule. That's why we are going to certify that our CLE programs meet the requirements of the rules in New York, Connecticut or both. We are confident in doing this because of our decades of experience and because our outstanding member faculty help us produce the best programs in the state.

Simplicity is a key in any system. That's why we have launched our online Professional Development Journal, which automatically tracks CLE credits you earn with the CBA. It even allows you to keep track

of your self-study credits and programs from other providers. This is another way that the CBA is helping you, as members, stay focused on the future.

Unlocking members' stories

During my 25 years in the bar, I have met many knowledgeable and talented members and continue to each day. The CBA has multiple opportunities for you to share your stories and expertise with fellow members and with the public. The channels we provide for these stories promote learning, builds our community, and encourages referrals.

Our BarChat and PracticeTips series have been popular with both members and the public. As a presenter, these videos allow you to share your expertise in a particular area, positioning you as a thought-leader; as a viewer, these videos provide a quick resource on a variety of topical areas of the law.

We also tell member stories in our *Weekly Docket*, *Connecticut Lawyer* magazine, and on social media through our "Members Making a Difference" initiative. This provides positive publicity, which not only helps our association and our profession, but will help in promoting your own practice. If you have a story, please share it with us at editor@ctbar.org.

In the coming year we will continue to expand these programs as well as provide new offerings, including a member blog and podcast programs.

Inclusion initiatives

Our diversity and inclusion initiatives continue to gain momentum. Some are passionate about this movement on social grounds. Others see the incredible busi-

(continued on page 36)

Executive Director (Continued from page 7)

ness power of diverse teams. I have seen a consistent and persistent focus on inclusion and diversity across the last four CBA presidents and I am confident it will continue into the future. It is becoming part of the fabric of our association—as it should be. One sure sign of that progress is the Diversity and Inclusion Summit that

occurred in October, where we brought together nearly 150 leaders in the legal community to go beyond the discussion of implicit bias and to make concrete commitments to one another about actions that can be implemented to transform our profession. This summit was the beginning of an ongoing dialogue so that we can help our profession adapt and thrive in the changing times ahead.

I have been involved with the Connecticut Bar Association as a member since 1991. I continue to be impressed by the dedica-

tion and commitment of all of our members. We collaborate in so many ways to accomplish our shared goals. Our community advocates for our profession and the people of Connecticut. We serve our clients and each other to help one another succeed. We share our knowledge through education to become the best professionals we can be. I am optimistic that together we will turn the challenges of the New Year into opportunities and to greater success. We will together move forward into thriving in the future. **CL**

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