

CBA Hosts First Virtual Connecticut Legal Conference

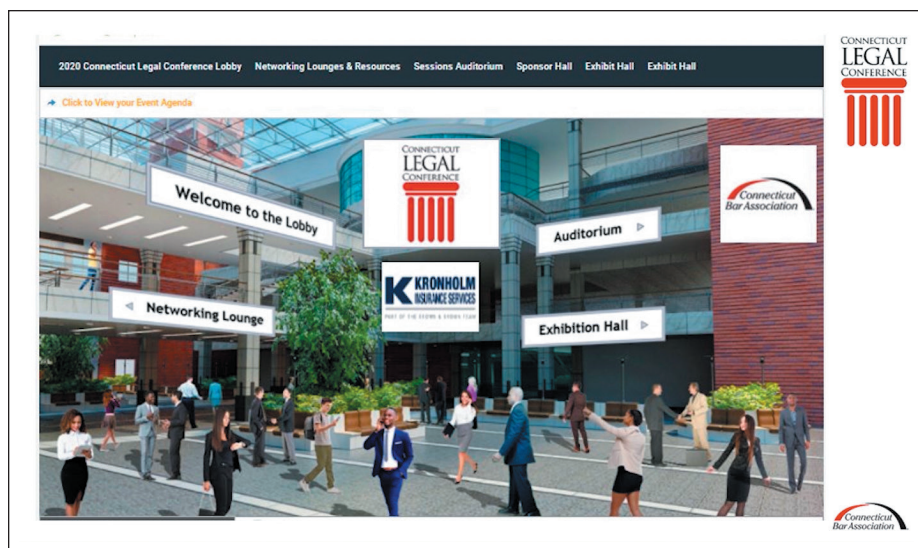
By CORRINE KING

MORE THAN 450 ATTORNEYS, judges, paralegals, and other legal professionals from across the state and country attended the first virtual Connecticut Legal Conference on September 14, 15, and 16. Originally scheduled for June at the Connecticut Convention Center, the conference was moved online as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and included 45 sessions, three opening plenaries, and opportunities to network with other registrants in the networking lounge and meet with exhibitors in the exhibition hall.

The conference began on Monday with the UConn School of Law Alumni Breakfast, where alumni met Dean Eboni Nelson, who started her new role as dean on July 31. After the breakfast, President Amy Lin Meyerson greeted the conference attendees and introduced the day's opening plenary speakers, Connecticut Supreme Court Chief Justice Richard A. Robinson and American Bar Association President (ABA) Patricia Lee Refo, who both shared inspiring remarks about the future of the legal profession.

"The law is the fabric that holds this society together and we as lawyers are the tailors of that cloth, with the ethical, moral, and legal responsibility to mend any tears that may occur," said Chief Justice Robinson. "Lawyers are not merely players sitting on the bench. Not only are we necessary players, we are leaders. Every one of us at this virtual event has the ability to lead and, in fact, must lead to get us through these crises."

Each day after the opening plenaries, conference attendees broke out



into more than a dozen conference sessions.

On Monday afternoon, during the "AAA Roadside Assistance for the Legal Profession: Advances in Technology, Artificial Intelligence, and Alternative Fee Arrangements" session, the 2020 COVID-19 Pandemic and State of the Legal Profession Task Forces discussed how they have been working to explore, implement, and promote certain advances in technology, as well as other changes in the way we practice law, to ensure the sustainability of the practice of law and shrink the access to justice gap.

The Standing Committee on Professional Ethics presented their "Ethics: 2019—The Year in Review" seminar, which looked at the most recent opinions from the committee, the Statewide Grievance Committee, and the courts, as well as a review of any proposed rules changes.

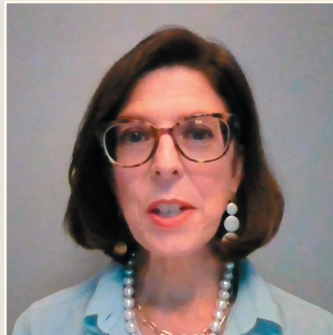
During Tuesday's opening plenary, Chief Judge Stefan R. Underhill from the United States District Court District of Connecticut discussed the changes in federal court as a result of the pandemic and Attorney General William Tong discussed the racial tensions facing our nation and the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts.

During the "Connecticut's Eviction Crisis and the Right to Counsel Movement" session on Tuesday morning, attendees learned about the eviction crisis in Connecticut, the national right-to-counsel movement, and lessons from nearby jurisdictions that have enacted right to counsel or increased access to justice for low-income tenants facing eviction.

On Wednesday morning, the final opening plenary speakers, Lieutenant Governor Susan Bysiewicz and Probate Court Administrator Beverly K. Streit-Kefalas, thanked attorneys for their



Chief Justice Richard A. Robinson



*Probate Court Administrator
Beverly K. Streit-Kefalas*



ABA President Patricia Lee Refo



Attorney General William Tong



Chief Judge Stefan R. Underhill



Lieutenant Governor Susan Bysiewicz

flexibility and teamwork during the pandemic.

Our featured speakers from SAB Negotiation Group presented “Effective Negotiating: Dynamic Negotiation Training” on Monday and an encore presentation on Wednesday afternoon. Attendees learned key negotiation tips, including how to develop an effective negotiation strategy and maximize persuasiveness, adapt their negotiation style for different situations, deal with difficult negotiators and improve and build re-

lationships; and effectively negotiate terms and conditions.

The “Safe Harbors and Calm Seas” session was presented by the Insurance Programs for the Bar Committee on both Tuesday and Wednesday afternoon. The session provided valuable instruction, risk control, and recommendations to help lawyers safely navigate today’s complex legal environment and assist them in minimizing professional liability risk.

The CBA thanks all those that helped make the Connecticut Legal Conference a great success—the presenters, moderators, attendees, exhibitors, and the sponsors, particularly Platinum Sponsor Kronholm Insurance Services and Gold Sponsors CATIC and Liberty Bank.

Watch the opening plenary speakers speeches at ctbar.org/CLC2020-Plenary.

Corrine King is the marketing lead at the Connecticut Bar Association.