

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

EVELYN PADIN

Serving you and each other in challenging times



*We are in
unprecedented times.*

Change is happening at a breathtaking pace. The COVID-19 pandemic has thrust us all into frightening and uncertain times.

As I write this message, I can't predict what the days ahead will bring us. But this I can say with absolute certainty: The New Jersey State Bar Association will be here no matter what comes.

Our mission is to serve and support all of our members and the entire legal community. We have been through hard times before. This Association has weathered two world wars, the Great Depression, the economic challenges of the most recent recession. During previous times of crisis like Sept. 11 and Superstorm Sandy, we have seen this community rise to great heights to help each other and serve society.

Already the Association has stepped up to new standard of service to help our members get through the coronavirus pandemic. We are in regular contact with the New Jersey judiciary; the federal courts and the executive branch to raise the concerns of our community with them on topics like jury trials, filing deadlines, tax deadlines, and what to do about paper copies of files and notices. Many of these issues and others are being addressed with our input in real time. We are sharing resources, news and information that is of concern to lawyers and the profession, including court notices and government updates. And we are continuing our online learning to ensure everyone can stay up-to-date, as well as offering a suite of free webinars to help lawyers tackle the specific issues facing law firms as they transition to virtual offices.

And our members are also stepping up. They are offering to share office space. They are answering questions about how to resolve novel practice questions. They are coming together virtually to help each other. Collectively, they are an inspiration to me.

Serving as president of the Association this past year has been a gift like no other in my professional path. I have had the incredible privilege of meeting with different groups of lawyers and professional groups around the state.

Each of those interactions has proven both how important the Association is in terms of the role it plays in society and the legal world, but also how smart, thoughtful and compassionate the lawyers of New Jersey are.

Though the circumstances we are living through are new to all of us, I have great faith that the result will be no different—the legal profession of New Jersey will give generously and passionately to its own and our residents.

I am so proud of what we have accomplished together in the past year. We have raised enough money to provide thousands of meals to New Jersey residents who don't have enough to eat. We have mobilized lawyers to provide free legal advice to hundreds of members of our communities. We have advocated for change in the halls of the statehouse.

As I prepare to end my tenure, I am heartened by the faith I have in President-Elect Kimberly A. Yonta to continue to lead the Association forward. She has energy and passion to keep our heart—our community—inspired and working together.

Let us all continue to support each other. It is more important now than ever to draw on the tenets of professionalism that guide us to be compassionate, kind and understanding toward our clients, our adversaries and our friends and family members.

Stay safe, stay healthy and stay strong. Thank you and Godspeed. ☺