



Justinian Society of Lawyers

Fall 2018 Newsletter

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President's Message

Dear Colleagues,

It is my greatest professional honor to take the helm as the Justinian Society of Lawyers' President for 2018-19 term. The opportunity to serve as President of such a prestigious organization is both humbling and rewarding; I therefore take this responsibility very seriously.

We can take great pride in the society's contributions to the practice of law and to the judicial system. The Justinian Society of Lawyers has evolved from an organization that was founded in 1921 by Italian immigrants and first-generation attorneys who sought parity in their profession, into a thriving bar association that has shepherded its brethren into a formidable force in the legal community. Our mission has transitioned to include active charitable contributions through the Justinian Endowment Fund's scholarship and children's endowment programs. As we move to the future it is fitting to remember our roots, pay homage to the giants who paved our way and continue to celebrate our rich Italian culture.

I have planned this year to both pay homage to the past and pave the road toward a bright future for our membership. Our September 26 Installation & Awards Dinner will be traditionally held at the iconic Palmer House Hilton Hotel. My thanks to Program Chair Hon. Gloria Coco for her hard work on the dinner, as well as Nicole Pisano who worked as co-chair. In moving to the future, we will host a fun-filled evening at our first Casino Night on February 21, 2019 at Formentos in the West Loop; proceeds to benefit the Justinian Endowment Fund. The rest of the year will include traditional dinner meetings as well as a cocktail event to mix up the old and the new – I hope this will bring more enthusiasm and increase membership.

I want to thank the Justinian Society officers, executive and endowment fund boards for their dedication and hard work. There is an inordinate amount of work that goes toward keeping this organization viable and relevant. One of the most dedicated members is Sam Tornatore, this year's Award of Excellence honoree. As many of you know, Sam is my uncle and he has been my mentor for many years, both in my personal and professional life. He is one of our most revered members, known for his professionalism, honesty and integrity. Sam was integral in my interest to become a lawyer and even now, as a seasoned attorney, he continues to be my consigliere and for that I am always grateful.

We can be proud to bestow the Outstanding Achievement Award to Cook County Board of Review Commissioner Michael Cabonargi, who has worked to make his office more transparent, open, efficient and effective.

I cannot conclude my first address without thanking my mom, Nina Albano Vidmer and my sister Grace, who works with Nina in managing the Justinian Society. For as long as I can remember, the Society has been a part of our lives, from stuffing envelopes, labeling newsletters, attending countless Columbus Day parades and now to planning my year as president.

I invite all of you to renew your dues and mark your calendar to participate in our Justinian events this year. It will be a chance to not only meet with old friends but gain new friends and network among professional colleagues. Graze e ci vediamo!

- Vincent R. Vidmer - President - 2018-2019

VINCENT R. VIDMER
PRESIDENT



Vincent Vidmer has been practicing law since 2008. Since launching his firm in 2011, the Law Office of Vincent R. Vidmer has served its clients with personal attention afforded by small firms and professional services offered by larger law firms. As a practicing attorney in Chicago, Vincent is involved with various legal matters, however his focus is on real estate law, real estate-related litigation, estate planning and general legal drafting. A part of the practice resides with the Liquor and Allied Workers Union, assisting in collective bargaining, fringe benefits, plan administration and the grievance and arbitration process.

Vincent attended Fenwick High School, received his bachelor's degree from Loyola University and his law degree from The John Marshall Law School. While attending law school, he was named to the Dean's List, studied Roman Law at the Vatican, earned the privilege and opportunity to be selected as one of two students to study international law in Prague, Czech Republic, and was the recipient of numerous scholarships. While

in Prague, Vincent worked at an international law firm, conducting research to assist in the legal rights of former property owners who were stripped of their land by the government during the communist era.

Vincent is an active member of the Illinois State Bar Association and currently serves on the Real Estate Section Council. He serves as President of the Justinian Society of Lawyers for the 2018-2019 term. He has been recognized multiple times by Illinois Superlawyers as a Rising Star, and he has been recognized by the Law Bulletin as an Emerging Lawyer, a distinction earned by fewer than 2 percent of all licensed lawyers to practice law in Illinois.

A Chicago-area native who lives in the West Loop, Vincent maintains an active role with various civic organizations and local chambers of commerce.

NATALIE M. PETRIC
1ST VICE PRESIDENT

Natalie M. Petric serves as Director, Enforcement Counsel in the Legal and Market Regulation Department of CME Group. She

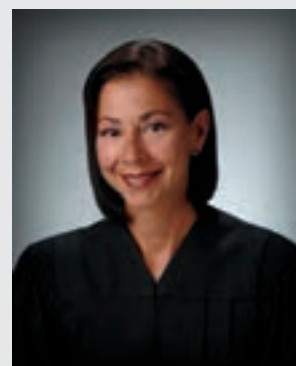


is responsible for managing a team of attorneys and litigating complex cases involving market abuses such as manipulation and fraud, to settlement or contested hearing, before the Exchange's disciplinary committees. Prior to joining CME Group in 2011, Natalie worked as a civil

defense trial attorney concentrating on general, premises, and products liability matters. Natalie also served as a prosecutor in the Cook County State's Attorney's Office prior to joining private practice, handling traffic, child support enforcement, and post-decree matters. While an Assistant State's Attorney, she tried numerous bench and jury trials. Natalie graduated *cum laude* from Tufts University with a bachelor's degree in International Relations with a concentration in Global Conflict, Cooperation, and Justice. While there, she captained the Women's Lightweight Varsity Crew team, on which she was a member all four years. She is an active member of the Tufts Admissions Network, interviewing and screening Tufts' applicants throughout the year. She received her law degree from DePaul University College of Law and served as Notes & Comments Editor on DePaul's Journal of Health Care Law. She is the proud granddaughter of past Justinian President Anthony J. Fornelli.

HON. REGINA A. SCANNICCHIO
2ND VICE PRESIDENT

Cook County Circuit Court Judge Regina A. Scannicchio sits in the Domestic Relations Division. Prior to taking the bench in 2011, her



practice focused on the area of family law. She is a graduate of The John Marshall Law School

and DePaul University. Regina served as the President of The John Marshall Alumni Association in 2013-2014 and received the Distinguished Service Award from The John Marshall Law School Alumni Association and the Spirit of John Marshall Award from The John Marshall Law School Board of Trustees. Regina is active outside of the legal community and currently serves on the Executive Council of The Shrine of Our Lady of Pompeii and received the da Vinci Award for Community Service from the Order Sons of Italy in America.

DION U. DAVI **3RD VICE PRESIDENT**

Dion U. Davi is the founding attorney of Davi Law Group, LLC, which concentrates in the areas of family law, criminal law, estate planning, and motor sports law, with offices in Wheaton, Joliet, Chicago, and Warrenville. Dion received his J.D. from The John Marshall Law School after attending DePaul University to receive his B.A. in psychology. He has served as an officer, including the President, of the DuPage Justinian Society of Lawyers. He has also served on the Board of Governors of the Illinois Statement Bar Association and the Board of Directors of the DuPage County Bar Association.



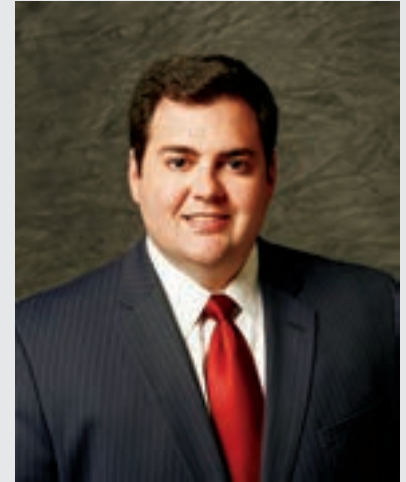
BRUNO M. MARASSO **TREASURER**

Bruno R. Marasso is a Senior Associate Attorney at Romanucci & Blandin, LLC, where he focuses his practice in the area of construction negligence, automobile collisions, wrongful death, premises liability, police misconduct, sexual abuse, and institutional misconduct. In 2017, Bruno, alongside past-president Antonio M. Romanucci, received a 44.7 million dollar verdict against the City of Chicago on behalf of a disabled man who was shot by an off-duty police officer. He has also had success reversing judge's decisions in the First District Appellate Court of Illinois.



In addition to his thriving practice and serving as treasurer as the Justinian Society of Lawyers, Bruno serves on the Assembly of the Illinois State Bar Association. Bruno is also an active member in the Illinois Trial Lawyers Association, the Chicago Bar Association, and the American Association of Justice. For his successes representing injured peoples, Bruno has proudly been named an Emerging Lawyer by Law Bulletin Publishing Company for 2017 and 2018 and Rising Star by Super Lawyers in 2018.

MICHAEL D. PISANO **SECRETARY**



Michael Pisano is an associate in Ice Miller's Litigation Group. He concentrates his practice in prosecuting and defending civil litigation matters with an emphasis in representing owners and construction professionals in claims for breach of contract, defective construction, construction delay, personal injury and property damage.

Michael received his J.D., *magna cum laude*, from The John Marshall Law School, where he was a member of The John Marshall Law Review and recipient of numerous merit scholarships. Notably, Michael was a recipient of the Lupel & Amari Scholarship and the Justinian Society of Lawyers Scholarship.

Michael has been an active member of the Justinian Society of Lawyers since he began law school. Over the years, he has served on many committees, including the Executive Committee, Newsletter Committee, Membership Committee, and Website Committee. Michael is also a member of the Illinois State Bar Association and the DuPage Children's Museum's Next Gen Board. He has been recognized by Super Lawyers as a "Rising Star" from 2014-2018.

SALVATORE J. TORNATORE

Award of Excellence

The Hon. Salvatore J. "Sam" Tornatore has served as a DuPage County Commissioner since 2012 and a DuPage County Health Department board member since 2015. He was appointed by Governor Pat Quinn and reappointed by Governor Bruce Rauner to serve on the board of the Illinois Housing Development Authority, where he also serves as its secretary. He was a member of the Roselle Zoning Board of Appeals from 2001 to 2003, a Roselle village trustee from 2004 to 2009, and a Bloomingdale Township trustee from 2009 to 2012. The president of the Roselle Chamber of Commerce from 2003 to 2005, he was honored as the cham-



ber's Man of the Year. Tornatore earned his undergraduate degree from DePaul University and his Juris Doctor from the John Marshall Law School, and has received the school's Distinguished Service

Award. He has served as an assembly member of the Illinois State Bar Association and a Judicial Evaluation Committee member for the Chicago Bar Association. A past Justinian president, he received the organization's Mentoring Award in 2008 and its Leadership Award in 2011. The president of the Chicagoland Italian American Charitable Organization from 1993 to 1999, he was honored as CIACO's Man of the Year. A past president of the National Italian American Bar Association, he is a founding board member of the Italian American Political Coalition and a recipient of its Distinguished Service Award.



Vote YES

to retain qualified,
experienced
judges!

cookcountyjudges.org

**Tuesday,
Nov. 6, 2018**



*Thank you to the Italian-American
community for electing us Judge.*

We are honored and grateful to serve.

*Please vote "Yes" Nov. 6 to retain us
and all qualified, experienced judges.*



Judge Lisa A. Marino
Judge Regina Scannicchio
Presiding Judge Jill C. Marisie
Judge Diann Marsalek
Judge Celia Louise Gamrath
Judge William G. Gamboney
Judge Thomas D. Roti




MICHAEL M. CABONARGI

Outstanding Achievement

The Hon. Michael M. Cabonargi has served as a Commissioner of the Cook County Board of Review since 2011 and currently serves as Chair. Previously, Cabonargi was a senior attorney and prosecutor at the Securities and Exchange Commission, where he investigated and litigated cases involving insider trading, offering fraud, pay-to-play and pyramid/Ponzi schemes. He received the SEC Director's Award for Excellence for combating financial fraud targeting seniors, and the Chairman's Award for bringing the largest private offering fraud case filed by the commission to a successful conclusion. Prior to joining the SEC, Cabonargi was a private attorney with a concentration in complex commercial and regulatory litigation. Before entering private practice, Cabonargi was an aide to U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin and to U.S. Sen. Paul Simon. Cabonargi has served as a board member of the Loyola Academy Bar Association, the District 39 Educational Foundation and the Milan Committee of Chicago's Sister Cities



program; a fellow with Leadership Greater Chicago; and member of the Illinois Comptroller's Ethics Commission and the University of Illinois College of Law Alumni Board. He received a dual B.A. in political science and foreign affairs from Miami University, and a J.D. from the University of Illinois College of Law. Cabonargi and his wife Erin have two sons and live in Wilmette.

Register Now!

Justinian Society of Lawyers

Annual Installation and Awards Dinner

September 26, 2018

Palmer House Hilton State & Monroe

Chicago

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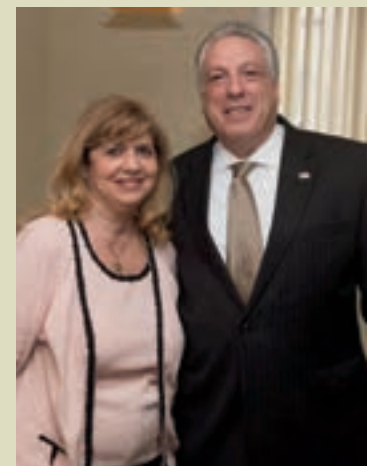
Nicole Pisano

at

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April Meeting

The April 12 Nomination of Officers Meeting took place at Tufanos, Chicago. Nominated were: Vincent R. Vidmer, president; Natalie M. Petric, 1st VP; Hon. Regina A. Scannicchio, 2nd VP; Dion U. Davi, 3rd VP; Bruno R. Marasso, treasurer; and Michael Pisano, secretary.



May Meeting

The Election and Installation of Officers meeting was held on May 16 at Gibsons. The Honorable Gloria G. Coco received the Judge Gerald Sbarbaro Mentorship Award.



Golf Outing

President Vincent Vidmer hosted a very successful annual Golf Outing, with 100 golfers and guests on June 6 at Bloomingdale Golf Club. Thanks to co-chairs Sam Tornatore, Franco Coladipietro, and Richard Caldarazzo. The committee included Bill Davy and Dominick Ranallo.



Elder Law Update:

Trusts: Does My Aging Mother Really Need One?

When clients come into our office, the first question they often ask is, “Do I need to set up a trust for my loved one?” The answer depends on the circumstances.

Frequently, clients are interested in setting up a trust in order to safeguard their assets from various creditors. Holding property in a trust in and of itself does not automatically protect assets. It is the selection of a given type of trust in a certain set of circumstances that may provide protection. Generally speaking, most people set up a revocable living trust (RLT) as part of their traditional estate plan. RLTs provide no asset protection and, in fact, they can have a negative impact in particular circumstances.

Nevertheless, RLTs can sometimes be useful, especially in the two scenarios that are described below. In these scenarios, the RLT is used to fund a separate trust that is designed to take effect after death for either an ill spouse or disabled child or third-party.

1) When a Spouse is Ill: Providing for the creation of a “special needs trust” (SNT) for your spouse under your will can benefit a surviving spouse who has a chronic disease such as Alzheimer’s. The SNT under your will is funded by a “pour-back” from your RLT to your will time of your death. This

testamentary SNT allows you to leave assets for your institutionalized spouse which can be used to pay for services that are not covered by the Medicaid program. Money remains in trust until the institutionalized spouse needs certain goods or services as specified in the SNT. At that time, a qualified trustee will use the assets for the institutionalized spouse. The beauty of this arrangement is that these SNTs are not considered “countable” assets that are subject to a Medicaid spend-down by the institutionalized spouse. Therefore, that spouse is allowed to keep these assets in trust without forfeiting her or his ability to qualify for Medicaid at the same time. This is a huge benefit for surviving spouses who have special needs as a result of Alzheimer’s, dementia, or other debilitating diseases.

2) When a Child (or Other Third Party) is Disabled: We find that when parents are worried about leaving their disabled child behind, they are troubled by the fact that the intended inheritance for this child may be spent down in order for the child to be eligible for governmental benefits. For many parents this is a real concern. However, parents can set up a third-party SNT, again funded at the parent’s death, through their RLT for their disabled child, or any other disabled beneficiary (cousin, nephew,



grandchild, friend, etc.). This SNT will contain assets that are not considered “countable” assets for purposes of governmental benefits, and at the time of the death of the disabled person, the assets are not subject to claw-back by the state of Illinois. This can be a huge benefit. This type of SNT can also be set up during the lifetime of the parent.

Thus, while you should always consider trusts as part of your estate plan, remember that not all trusts are the same. Often, a trust must contain provisions to target specific situations or concerns in order to be useful for the family.

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Tort Notes

Plaintiff's Attorneys: Beware Sole Proximate Causation of Multiple Non-Parties

By James J. Morici, Jr.

The Illinois Appellate Court, First District, recently clarified that defendants are entitled to a sole proximate cause theory and jury instruction in cases where the defendant claims the actions of multiple non-parties were the sole proximate cause of the plaintiff's injuries. In *Douglas v. Arlington Park Racecourse*, 2018 IL App (1st) 162962, a jockey fell while racing a horse at Arlington Park Racecourse and was paralyzed as a result. The Plaintiff argued the negligent and improper maintenance of the racecourse was the proximate cause of the Plaintiff's injuries. Plaintiff asserted that if the track material had been properly maintained he would have not been injured, or at least not to the same extent.

The Defendant asserted two other parties were the sole proximate cause for the Plaintiff's injuries: another jockey who clipped the Plaintiff's horse while racing which caused Plaintiff's fall; and the manufacturer of the track material. Defendant contended the manufacturer was negligent for not warning Defendant to maintain the track material so that it energy dissipates during a fall. The Plaintiff had already settled and dismissed the claims against the track material manufacturer, which left the racecourse operator as the only defendant in the suit.

At trial, the jury was instructed to find for the Defendant if they "decide that the sole proximate cause of the injury to the plaintiff was the conduct of some other person other than the defendant." Accompanying the instruction was a special interrogatory that asked whether "the conduct of some person other than the defendants sole proximate cause of the plaintiffs' injuries." The jury replied "yes" to the interrogatory

and, accordingly, returned a verdict for the defendant. *Id.* at 5. Post-trial, the court held that the instructions, combined with the special interrogatory, denied the Plaintiff a fair trial because they were vague and had prejudicial impact. Additionally, based on its reading of *Holton v. Memorial Hospital*, 176 Ill. 2d 95 (1997), the court found that the instructions were improper because the Defendant pointed to two non-parties. Accordingly, the trial judge granted a new trial, which resulted in the appeal.

The issue on appeal was whether sole proximate causation jury instructions are available in negligence actions where the defendant argues multiple non-parties were the sole proximate cause of the injury. The Appellate Court held, so long as the defendant claims that they are 0% at fault and non-parties are collectively 100% responsible, the sole proximate cause jury instruction is proper. *Douglas*, 2018 IL App (1st) 162962 at *17. The court clarified that the Horton court's decision to throw out the sole proximate cause jury instruction had nothing to do with the number of non-party actors that the defendant tried to force blame upon, and everything to do with how the defendant presented its case at trial. The Appellate Court reversed the trial court's order granting a new trial and remanded to the circuit court with instructions to reinstate the jury's original verdict.

This case is a clear warning to plaintiffs' attorneys: ignore the defendant's alternative theories of proximate causation at your own peril. It has always been this author's opinion that Defendant's negligence along with the proximate cause instruction makes a sole proximate cause instruction proper. This author believes "sole" denotes a cause other



than Defendant's acts or omissions being the only cause of injury. Obviously, if there is evidence of Defendant's negligence, there could never be a sole proximate cause. Nonetheless, Plaintiffs need to ensure they are presenting evidence at trial that strongly combats any theory of causality involving non-party conduct. First, even if the defense does not fully shift blame to non-parties, the jury may reduce the award that your client would have received. If the defendant is able to shift enough blame, the jury may find that the defendant isn't at fault. Second, if the defendant is able to shift blame to a non-party that has already settled out, the pre-trial settlement amount may not line up with the level of culpability that the jury assigns that non-party. The more parties the defendant can successfully blame, the less likely the jury is to return a favorable verdict for your client. Simply put, when the defense is able to muddy the causality waters, they're more likely to get a favorable result for their client at the expense of yours.

James J. Morici, Jr. is a partner in the firm of MORICI, FIGLIOLI & ASSOCIATES, and represents Plaintiffs in personal injury, workers' compensation, and construction site related injury suits. Read all prior issues of "Tort Notes" at www.MoriciFiglioli.com.

Negotiation Tip:

Initial Narrative

By John J. Lag

Negotiation is a process consisting of multiple stages and culminating in the resolution of the issues at hand by means of a negotiated settlement agreement. The entire negotiating experience is a Negotiation Event.

One of the first and most important steps employed by a skilled negotiator is to artfully tell their side of the dispute in a manner most favorable to them. This Initial Narrative is an integral component of any productive negotiation and is a useful tool in creating perceived value of the concessions that will be offered and sought in later bargaining.

Sometimes the story or narrative can actually create value in the matters at issue but can also detract from the perceived value. You can think of it as the “Antiques Roadshow” effect. The noted PBS television show begins each encounter, otherwise known as a ‘purposeful interaction’ with an introduction by means of preface, to the effect, ‘Hi, I’m Bob from small town America, a God fearing loyal citizen of modest means, just like you....’ that creates the personal connection with, and sympathies of, the audience. Then, the narrative... ‘My great granddaddy served in the Civil War, the Union side of course, and he was there when Lee surrendered at Appomattox. Grandpa Ulysses was merely an enlisted man, but had been assigned to set-up the desk for the ceremonial capitulation. When the signing was completed and all the



dignitaries left, Grandpa took this quill pen that was used to sign the surrender as a souvenir, which has been handed down in our family for generations.... You can see him in the background in this photograph of Lee signing the surrender with the pen.’ Bam! The pen is a priceless find and Bob is going to buy himself a new car.

The pen, with the engaging and verifiable narrative, is of great value. Conversely, the pen, with a narrative that ends with, ‘a very good replica’ is worth considerably less and Bob is only able to afford new tires for his car. The pen without the narrative is merely a pen, without substantial perceived value.

More common examples of the use of narrative creating perceived value can be found in the descriptions employed in the real estate sales industry. Instead of a house that needs substantial work, the term, fixer-upper, puts a positive spin on the condition. Vintage home sounds a lot better than, hasn’t seen a coat of paint in 50 years. Close to transportation connotes convenience rather than annoyance with the reality that the house is at the end of a runway. By the same token, a negative narra-

tive such as, haunted, or scene of the infamous crime... can destroy the perceived value by your opponent.

Listening purposefully to your opponent’s Initial Narrative is useful in gaining insight as to what they perceive to be the most important matters to be gained through negotiation and the relative value to them of their other demands. Remember that it is the perception of a perceived gain or loss in the eyes of your opponent in negotiation which is of value. They are seeking to get what they believe to be what’s best for them, so you should use your Initial Narrative in the most effective manner to placate their subjective needs and wants. It matters not to you what is intrinsically best for your opponent, but only what they believe is in their best interests. If you can give them that, in exchange for what you in fact know is best for you, then you have won the game.

JOHN J. LAG has developed The Art of Purposeful Negotiation over the course of a legal career spanning five decades which has provided him with invaluable knowledge and experience in the field of dispute resolution. In addition to practicing law, the author is an Adjunct Professor of Law at The John Marshall Law School where he teaches Negotiation Theory and Practice. He is also a Director of the International Academy of Dispute Resolution, promoting peace-making and education, worldwide.

Illinois Adopts the Uniform Bar Examination – What’s This All About?

By Leonard F. Amari

Our Illinois Supreme Court recently adopted the Uniform Bar Exam (UBE) to be the main component for bar admission. Thirty jurisdictions have, as of this writing, determined to use this UBE as a part of their bar admissions process.

The UBE is a nationwide test that allows test takers to transfer scores between states, which improves mobility of Illinois attorneys. The July 2019 examination will be the first time the UBE will be administered in Illinois.

The Illinois Board of Admission to the Bar held public hearings around the state in 2016 to provide information on the UBE and to seek comments regarding its potential adoption. The comments received were overwhelmingly supportive of the change. That same year, the 37,000 member Illinois State Bar Association Board through its Assembly, its supreme governing legislative body, issued recommendations for the adoption of the UBE.

The Structure and format of the Uniform Bar Exam

The UBE is made up of three parts: (1) two Multistate Performance Test (MPT) tasks, (2) the Multistate Essay Examination (MEE), and (3) the Multistate Bar Exam (MBE).

(1) Multistate Performance Test (MPT)

The MPT on the UBE has two



parts, both of which are tasks designed for new lawyers to be able to complete, “designed to evaluate certain fundamental skills lawyers are expected to demonstrate regardless of the area of law in which the skills are applied.”

For the MPT tasks, the applicant is given the laws that you need to apply to a fact scenario and asked to analyze those laws and write a brief, a memo, or other written product, providing 90 minutes for each MPT task.

(2) Multistate Essay Exam (MEE)

The MEE is made up of six essay questions, and providing 30 minutes to answer each one.

(3) Multistate Bar Exam (MBE)

The MBE portion of the UBE is an extensive multiple choice test, providing six hours to answer 200 multiple choice questions that span all of the first year law subjects, from Constitutional Law to Real Property.

In her extensively researched and very considered article on the adoption of the UBE, author Kellie R. Early states:

“The UBE is more than just a shared set of test components. At its essence, it is an agreement to give full faith and credit to examination scores generated in participating jurisdictions based upon the fact that all UBE jurisdictions uniformly administer, grade, and score the same examination.

Certain policies are followed by UBE jurisdictions in order to produce comparable scores, enhance score portability, and ensure reliable transfer of scores. Jurisdictions agree to adhere to these policies in order to be recognized as UBE jurisdictions and generate scores that qualify to be certified by the National Conference of Bar Examiners (NCBE) as UBE scores. These policies define what the UBE is and, by extension, what it is not.” (The Bar Examiner, September 2011)

The theory and practical application of the UBE by the National Conference of Bar Examiners in promoting the concept of a uniform test has been on record that an individual who performs to an acceptable level on a high-quality licensing test has attained clear recognition that should be accepted in other jurisdictions. Of course, other aspects of the licensing process – character and fitness screening, decisions about how to ensure that admittees are aware of the important variations in state law, and setting the pass/fail line below which a UBE score will not be accepted – will remain the province of each state board of bar examiners.

Continued page 13

Driven in no small part by the crisis of law schools in America, starting in 2008 and continuing, especially given the considerable debt burden with which law students graduate today, not to mention the diminishing job market, an effort to encourage mobility into the profession and from state to state is achieving recognition as an idea whose time has come. Another example of reviewing and improving the historical law school paradigm is the trend of law schools to permit applicants to take the Graduate Records Examination (GRE). The GRE can now be considered in lieu of the Law School Aptitude Test (LSAT) – given more often during the year and emphasizing math and science – whereas not the case with the LSAT. For example, as of this writing, The John Marshall Law School and Northwestern Law accept the GRE.

Of course, in Illinois, our high court has continued to retain jurisdiction in this examination process by maintaining its authority to decide who may sit for the bar exam and who will be admitted to practice, determine underlying educational requirements, make all character and fitness decisions, set their own policies regarding the number of times applicants may retake the bar examination, make ADA decisions, and grade the MEE and MPT.

Our Illinois Supreme Court remains on the cutting edge of licensing lawyers as is evidenced by its adopting the Uniform Bar Examination for law school graduates.

Alcentro Trattoria, Restaurant Review

By John Locallo

Alcentro Trattoria is a wonderful Italian restaurant that has recently opened in Bloomingdale. Alcentro serves exquisite Italian dishes in a vibrant and comfortable setting. And oh those dishes, pasta, pizza, pesce, carne, my mouth is watering as I write this!

But before I introduce the food, for proper perspective, allow me to describe the décor. Set in Old Town Bloomingdale, Alcentro combines a modern setting with old school vibe. Inside the lines are clean and modern, yet warmed by the reclaimed wood adorning the walls. The dining is on two levels. The bar, diners and open kitchen make up the first floor. The ceiling opens to the second floor, keeping those diners included in the energy emanating from below. French Quarter style balconies complete with fleur de lis and imported New Orleans gas lanterns adorn the second floor, providing atmospheric al fresco dining.

A wood burning oven imported from Italy adds old world magic to the pizzas and other dishes. Similar to the pizza of Naples, the dough is lightly crisp on the outside, and wonderfully chewy on the inside. Pizza Margherita, 4 Stagioni, Rustica and many other selections will tantalize you.

The pastas bring you back to Italy. Close your eyes and savor the aromas and tastes of Linguine Vongole e Bottarga with its fresh clams, garlic, parsley and imported fish roe. Warm your insides to the Strozzapreti di Carne, a twisted pasta with a pork and beef ragu. Smile at the Orecchiette al Tonno with its fresh tuna, pesto and cherry tomatoes. Weep at the beauty of



Linguine Barcaiolo with its fresh clams, mussels, shrimp, scallops and spicy cherry tomato sauce. Experience the Macarrones de Punzu with its traditional Sardinian semolina dumplings and lamb ragu.

The Carne and Pesce dishes are equally as beguiling- the fresh salmon, octopus, lamb, beef tenderloin, Cornish hen and others are sure to delight.

I can't say enough about this restaurant. Delicious, fun, and beautiful, you'll have to experience it yourselves. A true downtown restaurant in a suburban setting, Alcentro Trattoria is a legend in the making.

Alcentro Trattoria, 109 Third Street in Bloomingdale, just off Lake Street and South Bloomingdale Road.



JUSTINIANS IN THE NEWS



Judge Diann Marsalek was sworn in as President of Illinois Judges Foundation-IJF. Other officers include Vice-President Judge Sarah Smith, Treasurer Judge Debra Walker and Secretary Judge Brian McKillip. Shown in the photo is Retired Judge John Hauptman President Emeritus.



Lisa M. Longo named partner at Morici, Figlioli & Associates. A seasoned trial lawyer Ms. Longo joined the firm in 2015 and has a wealth of experience of over 20 years trying cases in the Circuit Court of Cook County.

Ms. Longo began her career at the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, where she served as an Assistant State's Attorney for over 17 years.

Finding Uncle Alfio

Retired Cook County Circuit Court Judge Gloria Coco performed the world premiere of her one-woman show, "Finding Uncle Alfio," on June 16 at the Center at Maple Grove Cemetery in Kew Garden, New York as part of celebrating Immigrant Heritage Month.

Now a writer and actor, Coco began the search for an uncle no one had seen since 1921 in response to her mother's death-bed pleas "Gloria, find my little brother, Alfio."

The 4-year-old had died on Ellis Island while the family waited for their papers to begin their new lives as Americans, but Coco's grandmother never knew what happened to her baby. "I knew my mother's soul would never rest until the mystery was solved," Coco says.

As she uncovered the truth of her uncle's demise, Coco unearthed a horrible secret regarding the fate of so many children who came through Ellis Island in those turbulent years of mass immigration.

After the performance, Coco led a procession to the mass grave where her uncle was buried.

Coco has been extremely active in the legal community, holding countless positions of importance on the local and national level, and actively participating in the education of judges and members of the legal profession. She was the first woman president of the Justinian Society of Lawyers, earning an

Celebrating Immigrant Heritage Month



Impresa Award from the Women's Division of the Joint Civic Committee of Italian Americans and a Leonardo da Vinci Award from the Illinois Grand Lodge of the Order Sons of Italy in America.

While serving as a judge, Gloria pursued her interest in the arts, graduated summa cum Laude from Northwestern University's School of Communications with a degree in radio, television, film and theater performance in 2004.

Among the plays she has penned is "The Passages of Grace," about her family's harrowing experiences on Ellis Island. She recounted the story in the chapter she wrote for "Italian Women in Chicago," edited by Dominic Candeloro. She performed this play for the Italian Senate in Rome, in 2015, and in 2016 for the 100th anniversary of the death of St. Mother Francis Cabrini's order, The Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Morici, Figlioli & Associates Celebrate 20th Anniversary



On September 18, 1998 long-time friends and co-workers James J. Morici, Jr. and David Figlioli, along with partner and Jim's cousin Robert H. Butzow (LoBello) founded the Chicago personal injury and worker's compensation law firm Morici Figlioli & Associates. On that Friday night, along with several family members, two employees and friends, they worked, celebrated and most importantly, called their clients to announce the new firm. The hard work, growth and success has continued ever since. "Our accomplishments have been beyond my wildest expectations," said Figlioli. Morici adds, "I never had a second of doubt, Dave Figlioli was already well established as one of Illinois' greatest workers' compensation lawyers and I had just come off a \$24 million dollar settlement of a construction site injury case."

What has followed over the years has been two expansions of the firm's suite at 150 North Michigan Avenue along with additional lawyers and support staff as the firm has tripled since that first night. Partners Mitch Friedman and Lisa M. Longo and associates Carl Virgilio, Tomas Cabrera and Michael G. Miller along with Jim's secretary Corina, help keep things hum-

ming. The firm's client base has tripled too, not to mention their Christmas card list of over 4,000 former satisfied clients.

Exclusively representing injured individuals, the firm's concentration has always been in representing those injured on construction sites. Butzow says, of the construction negligence cases, "they all begin with worker's compensation representation and nobody has been better than Jim Morici, Mitchell Friedman and Lisa Longo in prosecuting the Law Division cases that result." With Figlioli taking the lead, he, Butzow and Virgilio aggressively pursue workers' rights before the Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission. Auto, Products Liability, Nursing Home and injuries resulting from defective premises round out the practice.

The firm has taken several steps to commemorate their 20th Anniversary. One of which Morici is most proud is that they will award \$20,000 in scholarships to worthy Justinian student members this fall. Through the "Morici-LoBello Family Memorial Scholarship" Jim and the firm have awarded more than fifty thousand dollars in scholarships since the award was established in 1999.

NEWS



Katherine Amari-O'Dell joining other prominent members of our community at an Italian-American reception for Democratic gubernatorial candidate J B Pritzker, sponsored by Cook County Board of Review Commissioner Michael Cabonargi.



Long time Justinian Society Members, John J. Lag (Lagattuta) and Joseph R. Fortunato (L - R) attending a Meet and Greet with Illinois Governor candidate JB Pritzker and Italian American Leaders July 11, 2018 at the Union League Club of Chicago.

JUSTINIANS IN THE NEWS



The newly redecorated third floor offices of The John Marshall Law School now honors two prominent alumni - two past presidents of its Board of Trustees, and two past Justinian Presidents: the late **Alfred E. Gallo** and **Leonard F. Amari**, of the the offices of Amari & Locallo.



Sam and Beth Orticelli and Len and Donna Amari fishing in Canada.



Congratulations to ISBA President **James McCluskey**, who was named an associate judge of the Eighteenth Judicial Circuit.

McCluskey, a founding member of the law firm Momkus McCluskey, LLC, in Lisle, is a commercial litigator who has handled 60 jury trials and built one of DuPage County's largest law firms.

Long active in the ISBA, he is a member of the Board of Governors and previously served as a member of the Assembly and was chairman of its Agenda Committee. He has served on the ISBA Civil Practice & Procedure Section Council and its Allerton House Committee.

He received a bachelor's degree from Elmhurst College, a J.D. from Northern Illinois University College and an LLM from The John Marshall Law School.

Congrats to **Robert L. Gamrath III** upon becoming a partner at Burke, Warren, MacKay & Seritella.

Romanucci & Blandin Partner, **Frank A. Sommario** was appointed to serve an additional term as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Italian American Bar Association (NIABA) representing Illinois.

Romanucci & Blandin, LLC, proudly appointed **Michael Grieco** to associate attorney. Grieco began his tenure at R&B as a law clerk in 2014, focusing on plaintiff's personal injury, construction negligence, and medical malpractice cases.

VERDICTS & SETTLEMENTS

Tomas Cabrera, an associate at Morici Figlioli & Associates, has had a busy first 30 months of practice. In that short time the 2015 John Marshall graduate has tried seven cases to verdict. Most notably obtaining a \$71,000 verdict for a woman injured as a result of a rear-end collision. In another auto case, he beat the \$200 final defense offer securing a \$32,000 verdict.

Congratulations to Justinian **Mitchell B. Friedman** who recently obtained a \$250,000 settlement on behalf of an office worker who was injured when her desk's slide out computer keyboard holder broke loose and fell.

Friedman recently obtained a \$345,000 settlement in a Federal Court injury case. The client, a warehouse store shopper, was injured when a store employee using a fork lift on one side of an aisle pushed a box off to the other side striking the plaintiff who suffered a head injury, chipped tooth and a foot injury.

Romanucci & Blandin, LLC attorneys, **Antonio M. Romanucci** and **Gina A. DeBoni** continue to fight on behalf of their client, Yvonne Ambrose, who lost her 16 year-old-daughter after she was sold for sex on the website backpage.com.

Continued on page 17

R&B and Ambrose supported an aggressive national public affairs campaign to finally put an end the egregious acts protected by existing law, and in early November 2017, big tech companies like Google and Facebook that vehemently opposed legislation that would protect victims of sex trafficking reversed their tone and expressed their support for the bill. On April 11, 2018 the Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex-Trafficking Act was signed into federal law.

Romanucci & Blandin, LLC secured a \$6 million dollar settlement and a nearly \$1 million dollar Workers' Compensation Lien on behalf of their client who slipped and fell on a snow-covered, icy roof of an addition under construction in Chicago, Illinois. The client significantly injured his back, requiring four different surgeries and since has been declared disabled, no longer allowing him to work. To obtain this notable settlement, the attorneys at Romanucci & Blandin had to overcome a number of extraordinary legal hurdles, including a Motion for Summary Judgement brought forth by one of the defendants which was granted, appealed by the plaintiffs, and on appeal, reversed by the appellate court.

OBITS

† Our condolences to Nick Caputo on the passing of his wife, **Linda Caputo**.

† We are saddened to advise you of the passing of **Rosemarie Barbaro**, beloved wife of the late Judge Frank W. Barbaro.

Upcoming Justinian Events

2018

Wednesday, September 26

Installation Dinner

Palmer House Hilton, 17 E. Monroe, Chicago

Monday, October 8

Columbus Day Parade

State Street & Wacker Drive

Thursday, October 25

Cocktail Event

Location TBD, Chicago

Thursday, November 15

Past President's and Scholarship Dinner

Bella Notte, 1374 W. Grand, Chicago

2019

Thursday, February 21

Casino Night

Formentos, 925 W. Randolph, Chicago

Thursday, March 21

Children's Endowment Dinner

LuxBar, 18 E. Bellevue, Chicago

Thursday, April 18

Nomination of Officers

Tufano's, 1073 W. Vernon Park Pl, Chicago

Thursday, May 16

Installation of Officers

Gibsons, 1028 N. Rush, Chicago



JUSTINIAN SOCIETY OF LAWYERS

2018-19 DUES REQUEST FORM

Please complete the following form and return it with your dues check to:

THE JUSTINIAN SOCIETY OF LAWYERS

c/o Nina Albano Vidmer

P.O. Box 3217 • Oak Brook • IL 60522-3217

OR PAYONLINE AT WWW.JUSTINIANS.ORG

Name: _____

Last

First

Middle

Employer: _____

Firm name, business, corporation, government agency

Business Address: _____

Number

Street

Suite

City State Zip

Business Phone:(_____)_____ Fax:(_____)_____

Home Address: _____

Number

Street

Apt. #

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Home Phone:(_____)_____

Are you admitted to practice in states other than Illinois? If so, please specify: _____.

Year Admitted to Bar _____ Year Admitted to Justinian Society _____

Please list your e-mail and/or URL address:

E-Mail Address _____ URL _____

2018-2019 JUSTINIAN DUES

Check one

___ **REGULAR MEMBER: \$150.00** ___ **RETIRED : \$50.00** ___ **STUDENT: \$25.00**

(Regular Membership includes \$20 contribution to the JUSTINIAN SCHOLARSHIP FUND and free subscription to FRA NOI).

___ **FIRST-YEAR LAWYERS or STUDENTS** who are members of student Justinian Chapters

No charge for 1st year lawyers or students who are affiliated with Justinian Chapters. Please list your graduation date and law school

Law School: _____ Graduation Date: _____

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___ Children's Endowment Fund

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smart | strategic | secure

secure (sĭ-kyōōr') *adj.*

1. A situation that you can depend on because it is not likely to change.
2. Affording safety, as a place: *He needed a secure hideout.*
3. Feeling confident and free from fear or anxiety: *everyone needs to have a home and to feel secure and wanted.*
4. Firm and not likely to fail; stable.

[*syn.* defendable, defended, dependable, insured, protected, safe, shielded, sound, strong, trustworthy, watched over]

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