

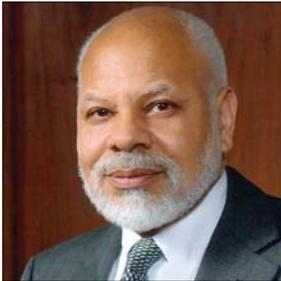


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NEW YORK STATE BAR ASSOCIATION State Bar News



PIONEERING LEADER

Past President Kenneth G. Standard received the Hon. George Bundy Smith Pioneer Award in March. Read about his extraordinary career.

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YOUNG LAWYERS SECTION PROFILE

The chair of one of the largest sections discusses its busy activity and event schedule for its members.

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Schraver's interests guide his priorities

One of State Bar's most active members becomes president on June 1

By Patricia Sears Doherty

The next president of the State Bar has built a career that has encompassed many legal concentrations, all of which developed from his intellectual curiosity—the Indians of New York state, gun violence, human trafficking, tax issues, syndication, nonprofit law, education, health law, intellectual property and complex litigation issues.

For David M. Schraver, that curiosity about—everything—has been the launching pad for his wide-ranging legal career and his many contributions to the State Bar. The letters of support nominating him to be president-elect in 2011 carry a common accolade: tireless activity.

“Even a cursory glance at his resume makes one wonder how he comes to each and every task he undertakes with such enthusiasm and dedication, both physically and spiritually,” wrote Lauren J. Wachtler of New York City (Mitchell Silberberg & Knupp LLP). “Most importantly, Dave always has a smile and a kind word for everyone.”

Melding interests, career

He graduated *cum laude* from Harvard University and *magna cum laude* from the University of Michigan Law School, where he was note and comment editor for the Law Review.



A busy agenda—David M. Schraver seems to thrive on his busy professional life. He will bring that energy and enthusiasm with him as he assumes the presidency on June 1. [Photo by Marty Kerins, Jr.]

As he waited to be admitted to the bar and called up to active duty in the U.S. Navy Judge Advocate General's Corps (JAG), Schraver, an Albany native, took a job in Rochester as a law clerk in the litigation department of Nixon, Hargrave, Devans & Doyle (now Nixon Peabody LLP).

While serving the Navy in Jacksonville, Florida, he inquired about a JAG opening at the U.S. Naval Disciplinary Command in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, the main prison for the U.S. Marines. He was named its

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Lau-Kee well-prepared to serve as president-elect

By Mark Mahoney



Glenn Lau-Kee

he said was, “I’m going to teach you everything I know. Goodbye. I’m leaving for vacation.” Lau-Kee recalled, with a laugh, his trial by fire into the world of work at a small law firm. “It really taught me how much I didn’t know.”

The many lessons Lau-Kee learned then, and throughout his long and varied legal career, will serve him well when he becomes the 117th president of the State Bar Association in June 2014.

But first, Lau-Kee of New York City (Kee & Lau-Kee, PLLC) will serve for the next year as president-elect to President David M. Schraver of Rochester (Nixon Peabody LLP). They begin their tenures on June 1.

Many State Bar hats

In his private practice with his father, Norman Lau Kee, the future president concentrates on real estate and business law.

The younger Lau-Kee has been a member of the State Bar for 14 years, serving as member-at-large of the

Executive Committee and co-chair of the Membership Committee, as well as a member of the Business Law, Health Law and Real Property Law sections.

He is a former member of the Task Force on the State of Our Courthouses and the Special Committees on Legal Specialization, Multijurisdictional Practice and Sarbanes-Oxley Issues.

A resident of Westport, Connecticut, he received his undergraduate degree from Yale University and earned his law degree from Boston University School of Law.

In 2010, he and his father received the Commercial and Federal Litigation Section’s George Bundy Smith Pioneer Award for their outstanding record of public service and their dedication to pro-

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Schraver will bring energy and enthusiasm with him as he becomes next president

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legal officer after being told that he was the only lawyer in the Navy who expressed an interest.

He threw himself into the job, intrigued to “learn what goes on inside the prison after the trial.” While he was the prison’s lawyer, Schraver also advised prisoners on legal aid matters, helped them to interface with their appellate lawyers, conducted investigations, did hearings, and got to know the prison.

“Once a month, I was the warden,” he said. “I ate in the prisoners’ mess, checked on the cellblock, on those in solitary confinement. I walked the perimeter at night and checked on the guards.”

He was awarded the Navy Achievement Medal for superior performance of his duties at the prison.

After re-entering civilian life, Schraver returned to Rochester and Nixon Hargrave. When the firm decided to open an office in Palm Beach, Florida, he relocated again and built broad experience in estate planning, residential and commercial real estate, trials and corporate law.

After five years in Florida, he returned to Rochester—“a very livable city.” He has been the managing partner of the Rochester office and chair of the technology and intellectual property groups, the litigation department and the personnel committee. He has served on its professional standards, operations and partner evaluation committees.

When firm partner G. Robert Witmer, Jr. enlisted his help with litigation of some Oneida Indian land claims, Schraver found an enduring part of his practice. He has written and spoken on Indian law issues and legal ethics and professionalism.

Essential Bar leader

He and Witmer, who was the 1994-95 State Bar president, forged a strong professional bond. Witmer will administer the oath of office to Schraver in Cooperstown.

“Dave has demonstrated repeatedly at several levels a thorough knowledge of the issues confronting our profession, the rare ability to consider all sides and then to achieve a thoughtful solution in a collegial and positive manner,” wrote Witmer and fellow former presidents James C. Moore, Justin L. Vigdor and Anthony R. Palermo in a joint president-elect nomination letter for Schraver.

Schraver’s second, President-elect Glenn Lau-Kee, called Schraver “one of the most thoughtful, informed and collegial leaders of the Association” in his nomination letter. “Importantly, he has a great sense of proportion and judgment in all matters and has a deep

understanding of the workings of the Association.”

Schraver’s State Bar activity list is long. He has been a member or leader of myriad State Bar committees and task forces. He is a member of the Commercial & Federal Litigation and Senior Lawyers Sections.

“Being part of the bar association is part of being a lawyer,” Schraver said during an interview with the State Bar News. “It is important to give back to the profession.”

Continuity among presidents

Schraver was a member of the Finance Committee for eight years, its chair for the last five of those years. There, he worked with many presidents and saw that there is “a lot more to it (the presidency) than I realized. This is a large, complex organization.” During his association work, he has attended section meetings and bar-wide events, and has come to know how the association works. As the incoming president, he has appointed committee chairs and members.

He is taking advantage of the close relationship of the State Bar and the American Bar Association, whose next president will be State Bar member James Silkenat of New York City (Sullivan & Worcester LLP). Schraver participates in regular conference calls on issues of mutual interest with Silkenat.

As president-elect to President Seymour W. James, Jr. (The Legal Aid Society in New York City), Schraver has seen the benefits of continuity on societal and professional issues over multiple presidencies. The State Bar’s influence with the state Legislature and New York’s congressional delegation and in the ABA’s House of Delegates has grown significantly, and Schraver credits the willingness of his presidential colleagues to carry priorities over many years to that success.

His presidential priorities reflect that collaboration. Legal education and the future of the profession, a common interest with past president Vincent E. Doyle III (Connors and Vilardo, LLP), tops Schraver’s concerns.

He plans to add to the roster of the Committee on Legal Education and Admission to the Bar, and broaden its mandate. He conducts monthly conference calls with its co-chairs, Eileen R. Kaufman of Central Islip (Touro College School of Law) and Eileen D. Millet of New York City (Epstein Becker & Green, P.C.) on the issues.

The September issue of the State Bar Journal will examine several topics related to legal education.

He plans to devote “half of the Presidential Summit” at next year’s Annual Meeting to the topic. When the



Defined interests—The State Bar’s next president, David M. Schraver, already has identified legal education and the future of the profession as presidential priorities. *(Photo by Brandon Vogel)*

ABA releases the report of its Task Force on the Future of Legal Education, Schraver “will use it and pay attention to its conclusions.”

He is considering sponsoring a legal education conclave, modeled after something similar hosted by the Virginia State Bar over the past 20 years.

“These are very important issues and we need to be spending more time on this,” said Schraver.

While president-elect, Schraver began a discussion with President James on gun violence. Schraver wanted to appoint a task force to examine the issue when he became president. But recent events made it clear “that the timing needed to move that agenda ahead.”

James created the Task Force on Gun Violence this spring. Schraver helped name its members and concentrated on setting up a balanced group of members from upstate and downstate, gun owners, rural members, and (and to the extent known) different political persuasions.

“We don’t want to be polarizing on the topic,” Schraver said. “But lawyers need to be part of the discussion.”

Human trafficking

President James appointed a Special Committee on Human Trafficking. Schraver intends to keep it working through his presidency. “This is another longterm topic that will certainly carry over,” he said.

Schraver promised that his “interests will continue to develop” over the next several months. His presidential motto will be: “Serving the profession, serving the public.”

His presidential year will be characterized by what he called the “four F’s of bar associations: focused, flexible, fast and friendly.”

That means providing practical bene-

fits for members, as outlined in any law firm’s strategic plan. “You have to make it a good place for your clients; a good place for people to work; establish a sound financial footing; and make improvements in the way you conduct the business of the organization.

“With a bar association, you need all of those—but, the customers are your members and your volunteers. So, you want to provide value and a good volunteer experience,” said Schraver.

He will keep close watch over the State Bar’s value to its members and improving its technology. He also wants to ensure that the State Bar is a good place for its staff to work. “It should be a place where their contributions are acknowledged and they know that they are an important part of our operation,” he said.

Family sketch

Schraver and his wife, Nancy, have been married for 24 years. Between them they have seven grandchildren. He has two children from his previous marriage, a daughter, who is a certified public accountant, and a son, who teaches Advanced Placement chemistry and statistics at Victor High School, coaches soccer and is the advisor to the ski club. Nancy has two sons, one of whom is an employment lawyer in Rochester and a State Bar member.

Schraver is proud to claim Albany as his hometown. Often when he returns for State Bar activities, he travels through his old neighborhood, remembering how it was and noticing the changes. It does not look the same, but he cherishes his childhood memories. It is that attention to detail—and the ability to honor what has gone before—that defines his career and his life. ♦

Sears Doherty is State Bar News editor.