

President's Perspective — June 2010

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Greetings!

I am truly honored, and humbled, at the privilege of serving as the 84th President of this great Bar Association. Thank you for the opportunity to be the spokesperson for the second largest county bar association in New Jersey. I look forward to working with our newly elected and returning officers and trustees of the Association to make this an unforgettable year.

In the Camden County Bar Association's 129 years, we have grown into a large, versatile group of more than 2200 members strong, serving our profession and community. Yet, this is a time of change for the Bar Association, on a number of fronts. First, the economy continues to take its toll on our profession and by extension, our Association. As professionals, we are all stretched thin with our responsibilities both at work and at home. Our challenge this year is to grow our association, through new and different methods, including events and programs, thereby demonstrating to our members the value of the Camden County Bar Association. One such program, *Lawyers in Transition*, was started this past year by my successor, Lou Lessig and our Immediate Past President Rick DeMichele. This is an important program, which provides support to lawyers who have been laid off or are unable to find employment, that I want to grow. In addition, we must work very hard this year to find new and different ways to attract new members as well as retain our membership, providing them with the valuable services they know they can expect from our Bar Association. To that end, we both want and need the input of our membership. Please tell us how we can make the Bar Association a better, stronger Association that meets your needs.

January of 2010 saw the advent of mandatory continuing legal education for lawyers licensed in the State of New Jersey. I am happy to report that the Camden County Bar Association has been granted Accredited Service Provider Status by the Supreme Court of New Jersey, Board on Continuing Legal Education. One of the priorities this year will be to expand our already strong continuing legal education program to make the Camden County Bar Association the choice for CLE credits and educational advancement. I know our CLE Committee is up to the challenge.

New Jersey swore in a new governor on January 19, 2010. With the advent of a new governor comes change, and the Bar Association has not escaped this. Unfortunately, the county bar associations were eliminated from the Judicial and Prosecutorial Compact with the Governor. However, we will work closely with the State Bar Association to ensure our voice is heard. Further, while I was disheartened, as I know many of you were, by the decision not to reappoint Justice John Wallace to the Supreme Court, I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge his many great contributions to both the bench for the thirty plus years he has admirably served, and the Camden County Bar Association, where he has been an active supporter. I know I speak for all of you when I say that the Camden County Bar Association has been proud to call Justice Wallace one of ours.

As the Board looks to meet our challenges in these changing times, communication to our members and those in the legal community will be key. For some, the tried and true *Barrister* and the flyers inside are still how they learn about the Association. For others, the *e-Barrister* (email) and our web site have proven to be great resources. Yet many of our young lawyers and law students will say that is passé. Blogs, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn are the communication methods of today. Thanks to our Executive Director Larry Pelletier, the Camden County Bar Association is now on FaceBook. Be sure to check out our page, and become a member. However, this year, we will need to explore expanding the use of these new communication mediums to reach our changing membership. Who knows, by this time next year, I may have mastered the art of blogging and Twittering!

I look forward to this exciting year and in working with you to strengthen our Bar Association, and welcome your thoughts and ideas. I also want to offer my congratulations to my friend and colleague, Joe McCormick, as he assumes the role of President of the Camden County Bar Foundation. I know he will do an excellent job and I look forward to working closely with him in this coming year.