

# Colorado Bar Association President's Message to Members

## Colorado Bar Association Leadership Training ("COBALT")

by Elizabeth A. Starrs



As I begin my year at the helm of the Colorado Bar Association, I want to take a moment to honor my predecessor, Roger Clark. Roger has shown me that effective leadership involves putting one's personal views aside, working hard at being neutral, and allowing all points of view to be heard before building a consensus; that great intelligence is useless unless it is used to enhance the goals of the organization; and that integrity and humility often can break down barriers to promote resolution of a problem. Roger, you are one of my Heroes of the Bar. Thank you so much for what you have taught me!

### Leadership Training

About a year ago, Roger Clark asked me to spearhead the development of a leadership training program for CBA members. Roger felt the CBA needed to gradually build a large core of practicing attorneys to become leaders with respect to ethical, professional, and community service issues; to build relationships among legal leaders throughout the state; and to build a pool of members from which the CBA and local bar associations could draw for service. At the same time, Roger wanted to raise the level of awareness of all lawyers regarding the major issues facing us today within the legal profession and in our communities at large.

### COBALT Steering Committee

I agreed with Roger that these are great ideas, and enlisted the aid of the incomparable Dana Collier Smith, CBA Assistant Executive Director, who quickly obtained materials from similar programs around the country. We then gathered a group of current and former leaders of the CBA, local bar associations, and communities to create a steering committee for the project. The individuals who accepted an invitation to become part of this program's steering committee are (in alphabetical order): Megan Brynhildsen (Denver); Roger Clark (Loveland); Joe Dischinger (Denver); John Frey (Fort Collins); Andrew Gorgey (Colorado Springs); Mary Jo Gross (Denver); Julie Haines (Denver); Brian Popp (Greenwood Village); and Kirk Rider (Grand Junction). Recently, CBA President Elect David Lytle (Pueblo) also joined us. All of these individuals have had substantial experience in leadership positions and, fortunately for the CBA, are willing and able to give of their time to move this effort forward and develop the program we envision. Information about each of the steering committee members appears at the end of this message.

The steering committee first met in October 2005 to investigate whether there is a need or an interest among our mem-

bers for such a program. After determining there is a need, we have met regularly to put together this fascinating project. Our first and most significant accomplishment was choosing a name for the program: Colorado Bar Association Leadership Training ("COBALT").

### Selecting COBALT Participants

A next critical step in developing the program was to determine who will actually participate. The COBALT steering committee will be reaching out to the legal community and requesting nominations for individuals in all geographic areas of the state, all experience levels, and all practice areas to apply to become participants in the 2007 COBALT program. During July, nomination forms will be distributed to the Chief Judges of every judicial district within the state, the president of every local bar association, and the chair of every CBA section and committee. Individual self-nominations will be accepted, as well.

Included with the nomination form will be a statement of expectations and obligations of the participants, such as financial obligations and attendance requirements. Tuition will be \$1,000 and will cover all materials, meals, and one night's lodging. Travel costs will be borne by the participants. All other expenses will be assumed by the CBA. The CBA Budget and Planning Committee approved \$15,000 for this project and we believe that, with tuition, this will be sufficient.

The tentative deadline to return nominations is October 1, 2006; the precise deadline will be outlined in the materials that are mailed. The steering committee will meet soon after the deadline and will select no more than twenty people to become the first "class" of COBALT.

### 2007 COBALT Programs

The COBALT steering committee has been amazing in its dedication and professional approach to obtaining our goal. We have devised an ambitious calendar for our inaugural year with programs scheduled in five locations around the state, along with an agenda that includes discussion of several pertinent topics, all to be led by CBA's best and brightest. Here is a brief introduction to the 2007 COBALT schedule of programs.

### Leadership Through Service

COBALT will begin with a retreat on January 18–20, 2007. This will be held at the Stanley Hotel in Estes Park. During these couple of days, the participants will meet the steering committee members and get an overview of the six-month pro-

gram; hear the inspiring thoughts of former Colorado Supreme Court Justice Rebecca Love Kourlis and CBA Past-President John Moye on the topic of "Leadership Through Service"; and generally become acquainted with those with whom they will be making this interesting journey. We also will be looking at reference materials used throughout the program, the service projects with which the participants will become involved, and the participants' overall expectations of COBALT.

### **Understanding the CBA**

On Friday, February 16, 2007, Mary Jo Gross will be chairing a full-day program on understanding the CBA. CBA Executive Director Chuck Turner will talk about the history and mission of the Association, the organization's structure, the role of staff, CBA committees and sections, as well as CBA-sponsored programs. Participants also will hear from Colorado Court of Appeals Judge JoAnn Vogt, who is chair of the Access to Justice Commission; Diana Poole, Executive Director of the Legal Aid Foundation and Colorado Trust Account Foundation ("COLTAF"); John Holt, representing Colorado Lawyers Helping Lawyers; and Roger Clark.

### **Concepts and Skills in Leadership**

On Friday, March 16, 2007, COBALT participants will meet in Colorado Springs at the Penrose House Conference and Education Center. Drew Gorgey will lead the full-day program entitled "Concepts and Skills in Leadership." Speakers at this session will facilitate discussions that focus on leadership styles and skills, and provide explanations of supervising, managing, and leading. We hope to equip the participants with a balance of practical and theoretical leadership skills that are applicable in Bar leadership, as well as in broader contexts. Topics will include self-motivation, motivation of others, time management, effective communication, as well as organizational management, project management, and strategic thinking and planning.

### **Ethics, Justice, and Values**

On Friday, April 20, 2007, the COBALT participants will meet in Glenwood Springs for a program led by Joe Dischinger entitled "Ethics, Justice, and Values." There will be facilitated discussions on the relevant topics, in addition to presentations by Hon. John Jostad, a Magistrate Judge in Larimer County and District Courts and the former chair of the CBA Ethics Committee; and Colorado Supreme Court Justice Nancy Rice.

### **Community Leadership and the Lawyer**

On Friday, May 25, 2007, John Frey and Kirk Rider will lead a seminar entitled "Community Leadership and the Lawyer—Statesman Ideal." This program will be held at the Grand Lodge in Crested Butte. Discussions of leadership in government will be conducted with State Representative Bernie Buescher of House District 55, who also is a lawyer; Kenneth Bueche, retired executive director of the Colorado Municipal League; and Hon. Dennis Maes, Chief Judge of the Pueblo Combined Court.

### **Where Do You Go From Here?**

COBALT's final program, entitled "Where Do You Go From Here?" is chaired by Julie Haines and Megan Brynhildsen. It will be held in Denver. Participants will report on what they have done and learned during the previous six months. There will be a "graduation" ceremony and reception for everyone who participated in the program in 2007.

We are excited to launch COBALT. The able steering committee and Dana Collier Smith have worked tirelessly on this project, which promises to be an exciting opportunity to renew our commitment to our profession and our communities. If you would like more information about COBALT or if you have questions about the nomination process, please contact Dana Collier Smith at (303) 824-5318, (800) 332-6736, or dcollier.smith@cobar.org.

## **COBALT 2007 STEERING COMMITTEE**

### **Megan F. Brynhildsen**

Chair, DBA Young Lawyers Division; DBA Second Vice-President; Recipient of the DBA's "Young Lawyer of the Year" Award

### **Roger E. Clark**

CBA President; CBA Executive Council; Chair, CBA Young Lawyers Section; Chair, CBA General Practice Section; CBA Executive Council; CBA Vice-President; President, Larimer County Bar Association; CBA Executive Committee; Member, Colorado Bar Fellows; Member, ABA Fellows; President, Loveland Sertoma Club; President, Loveland Chamber of Commerce; Loveland Economic Development Council; Board of Directors, Northern Colorado Economic Development Commission

### **Joseph B. Dischinger**

DBA President; Delegate, CBA Board of Governors; Member, CBA Ethics Committee; President of the Thompson G. Marsh American Inn of Court; Member, Colorado Supreme Court Committee on Gender and Justice;

Member, Executive Committee; Chairman, Service to the Public Subcommittee

### **John P. Frey**

President, Larimer County Bar Association; Delegate to the CBA Board of Governors; Recipient, Larimer County Bar Professionalism Award; President, Larimer County Mental Health Advisory Board; Legal Aid Foundation Board; President, Foothills Unitarian Church

### **Andrew C. Gorgey**

Chief Deputy County Attorney, El Paso County Attorney's Office; Invited Speaker, ABA's Bar Leadership Institute; Recipient, El Paso County Bar Association's Outstanding Young Lawyer Award; President, University of Colorado—Colorado Springs Alumni Board

### **Mary Jo Gross**

DBA President; CBA Board of Governors; CBA/DBA Joint Management Committee; CBA Vice-President; CBA Long-Range Planning Committee; Chairperson, CBA Convention Committee; CBA Executive Council; Past

Chairperson, University of Denver Sturm College of Law Alumni Council

### **Julie E. Haines**

Chair, CBA Young Lawyers Division; Delegate, CBA Board of Governors; Denver Kids Inc. Big Sister Mentor

### **Brian S. Popp**

Chair, DBA Young Lawyers Division; Treasurer, CBA Solo and Small Firms Committee; Treasurer, Thompson G. Marsh American Inn of Court

### **Kirk Rider**

President, Mesa County Bar Association; President, Grand County Rotary Club; Chairman, Mesa County Public Library Fund Drive

### **Wm. David Lytle**

CBA President-Elect; CBA Vice-President; Attorney Council, Colorado Association of School Board; Executive Committee and Treasurer, Boy Scouts of America Rocky Mountain Council; Pueblo Economic Development Corporation