

Message from the Incoming Chair

Following **Judie Grimaldi's** leadership, enthusiasm and forward thinking is no small feat. As we enter our 30th year as a Section there are a number of initiatives that began this last year from the initiative to develop and evaluate new residential alternatives, modeled after the Dementia Village in the Netherlands, led by **Joe Greenman** and **Neil Rimsky** of the Real Estate and Housing Committee, to the renewed initiative of assisting our Section members with managing competitive challenges to our businesses with the revival of the Task Force focusing on Challenges to the Medicaid Planning Practice Area (formerly the Task Force on the Unauthorized Practice of Law). The Task Force's leadership includes **Robert Kurre**, **Sal Di Costanzo**, **Laurie Menzies** and **Rene Reixach**. These new initiatives are in their infancy and we look forward to stewarding them into the next year.



Tara Anne Pleat

This new year is also marked by NYSBA's initiative under President **Hank Greenberg** to bring the Bar Association itself and its technology into the 21st Century and beyond. Over the course of the next several months NYSBA's, and therefore our Section's, online identity is going to change and will do so for the better. The Section Leadership Conference, which took place on May 9th and 10th, was devoted to this digital transformation and the sharing of information and ideas to extend our reach, our connectivity and our relevance. As part of this transformation, NYSBA has asked the Sections to begin to develop a social media presence. To that end, over the course of the next several months you will see an increased presence (and perhaps you will be tagged) on the NYSBA Elder Law and Special Needs Section's LinkedIn page and on Twitter @nysbaelderlaw. If you have cases, fair hearings, or articles that you believe are of particular relevance to the ELSN, please continue to share them on the communities or forward them to **Mike Dezik** at MDezik@WPLawNY.com, the new vice-chair of our Technology Committee who will be responsible for our social media presence over the upcoming year. We ask that you follow our LinkedIn page and share the posts that you find to be relevant, and if you see us Twitter retweet the ELSN's messages; doing so will help us enhance our reach, our influence and our membership. We look forward to the leadership and assistance of **Scott Silverberg**, **Daniel Miller**, and **Anne Della-Iacono** as the Section's digital presence changes.

We will maintain our focus on developing new members and making the Section more accessible and inviting

to younger attorneys who are interested in our practice areas. The Membership Services Committee will be led by three new faces: **Emily Kahn**, **Kristen Casper** and **Katy Carpenter**. Katy has worked with NYSBA's Young Lawyers Committee Incoming Chair (and new mom!) **Lauren Sharkey**, on holding membership events around the state, and we look forward to another year of their new and welcoming initiatives for the Section.

The ELSN hosted its summer meeting at the Marriott Long Wharf in Boston, Massachusetts from July 18-20, 2019. Co-chairs, **Jeffrey Asher** and **Judith Nolfo**, worked hard to make this an interesting and diverse meeting for our Section attendees. Thursday began with **Christopher Lyons, Esq.** the Executive Director of AIM Services, Inc., a disability service provider upstate, and **June MacClelland**, former Executive Director of AIM Services, Inc. and parent, explaining how their agency approaches supporting individuals with special needs and their families in an "Executive Hour" devoted to understanding the lives and desires of their consumers and providing Section members with their required diversity credit. Chris and June were followed by **Mary Ann Allen, Esq.**, Executive Director of Wildwood Programs, a disability service provider in the Capital Region. **Mary Ann**, the parent of a young man with autism, gave us both a bird's eye view and real life impact of what changes to the OPWDD system of service delivery will have on the individuals and families the service system supports, and what our clients should expect and how we can help them have a realistic understanding of what the future holds and what to consider in planning for their loved ones with special needs. Thursday afternoon was rounded off with a panel of Surrogate's from around the state which was moderated by **Edward Wilcenski** and NAELA giant, **Ron Landsman**. The **Hon. Richard Kupferman** from Saratoga County, the **Hon. Peter Kelly** from Queens County, the **Hon. Acea Mosey** from Erie County and the **Hon. Brandon Sall** from Westchester County participated on a panel devoted to Special Needs Trust Practice and issues before their courts, Article 17-A Guardianships and the importance of knowledgeable and trained Guardians *ad Litem* in these cases. Our programming was followed by a two-hour cocktail reception at the Long Wharf overlooking the majestic Boston Harbor.

Friday's program began with another of our NAELA colleagues and Massachusetts attorney, **Neal Winston, Esq.**, focusing on the ABC's of the Social Security Administration with a review of some common and lesser known programs that provide financial support to individuals with disabilities. The second segment was led by **Howard Krooks, Esq.**, reminding us all what sole benefit trusts actually are and when and how they are used. **Howie** was followed by **Ellyn Kravitz, Esq.** and **Cora Alsante, Esq.** who discussed family law considerations

when special needs children are part of the family unit, highlighting issues and pitfalls that will allow us to be more resourceful and market that resourcefulness to our colleagues in the family law sector. Friday's program was rounded out by **Kate Jerian, Esq.** from the ARC New York who gave us an update on where reform of Article 17-A Guardianship stands.

Friday afternoon attendees had a selection of social events to consider: a behind-the-scenes tour of Fenway, a trip to the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, or a Freedom Trail Pub Crawl, each intended to offer a sampling of the history and culture of the great and historical City of Boston. Our evening Friday night was a cocktail reception and dinner at the Aquarium. When **Anthony Anea** was Chair back in 2011, this dinner was such a great time that we decided to do our best to replicate it.

To close our meeting on Saturday morning, incoming Chair-elect, **Matthew Nolfo, Esq.** gave us our Summer Update. **Matt** was followed by **Libby Coreno, Esq.** who spoke to us about attorney wellness in a talk entitled the "Science of Stress and the Road to Wellbeing." Finally, our Ethics Committee leaders, **Joanne Seminara, Robert Mascali, Paul Ryther** and **Richard Marchese** rounded out the morning with an interactive case study, getting us our ethics credit and keeping us engaged! We hope you enjoyed an informative forward thinking and educational program.

The confirmed programming for the balance of the 2019-2020 year and their locations are as follows:

Fall Meeting, with the Trusts and Estates Law Section, October 24 – 25, 2019 at the Gideon Putnam in Saratoga Springs.

Annual Meeting, January 28, 2020 at the Midtown Hilton in New York City.

The UnProgram, April 30 – May 1, 2020 at the Desmond Hotel and Conference Center in Albany.

Please save these dates as we hope to see each of you at these upcoming Section conferences!

In addition, our Section is co-sponsoring a joint program in the Fall with the Health Law Section focused on end-of-life-decision making in conjunction with their fall meeting, a program that won national awards in its last iteration. The date for this program is November 8, 2019 and it is being held at the NYSBA Bar Center at One Elk Street in Albany. Thank you to our Health Care Issues Committee leadership, **David Kronenberg, Tammy Lawlor** and **Moriah Adamo** for their representation of our Section in this collaborative program.

While the dates have not yet been confirmed, we do anticipate a joint venture with the Trusts and Estates Law Section and NYSBA's Committee on Veterans in the Spring of 2020 where a Veterans-focused CLE and clinic

will be held. As that program is fleshed out, more details will follow.

This is just some of what we as a Section hope to provide to the membership by way of programming and information this year. We have a host of amazing committees with active and involved leaders, and if you are not yet a part of a committee please email our Section Liaison, Lisa Bataille at LBataille@nysba.org, and request a Section Guide or reach out to me so we can find a fit for you.

In addition to the gratitude owed to outgoing chair, **Judith Grimaldi**, for her leadership and mentorship, the Section's Officers, Immediate Past President **Marty Hersh**; Vice-Chair **Matt Nolfo**; Secretary **Deep Mukerji**; outgoing Treasurer **Christopher Bray**, and incoming Treasurer **Fern Finkel** are owed a great debt of gratitude for the time and effort they each put in to making this Section one of the best in the New York State Bar Association.

We look forward to working with you and seeing you this upcoming year.

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NEW YORK STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

REQUEST FOR ARTICLES

If you have written an article you would like considered for publication, or have an idea for one, please contact *Elder and Special Needs Law Journal* Co-Editors:



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Articles should be submitted in electronic document format (pdfs are NOT acceptable), along with biographical information.

