



# CONFERENCE OF BAR LEADERS FALL MEETING

Wednesday, October 29, 2025



Committee for Bar Leaders  
of New York State



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## Opening Remarks

Taa Grays

Chair, Committee on Bar Leaders

President-Elect New York State Bar  
Association

# WELCOME



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## Agenda

1:00 – 5:30 p.m.

Opening Remarks

- ◆ **Connecting Generations:** Engaging, Recruiting, and Retaining Lawyers through their Careers
- ◆ **From First Impressions to Lasting Engagement:** Onboarding Strategies That Drive Member Retention Beyond the Welcome
- ◆ **Passing the Gavel:** Creating a Strategic Playbook for Seamless Leadership Transitions in Bar Associations

5:30-7:30 p.m.

- ◆ **Reception**
- ◆ **Innovation Award Ceremony**



# Theme

Connecting Generations:  
Engaging, Recruiting, and  
Retaining Lawyers through  
their Careers

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## **Connecting Generations:**

Engaging, Recruiting, and Retaining Lawyers through their Careers

1:15 pm – 2:15 pm

**Jacob Petterchak**

**Moderator**

House of Delegates Representative

American Bar Association



Jim Montes Asst. Dean for  
Career & Professional  
Development at Touro Law  
Center



Ali Toumekian  
ABA YLD  
Director of  
Affiliates



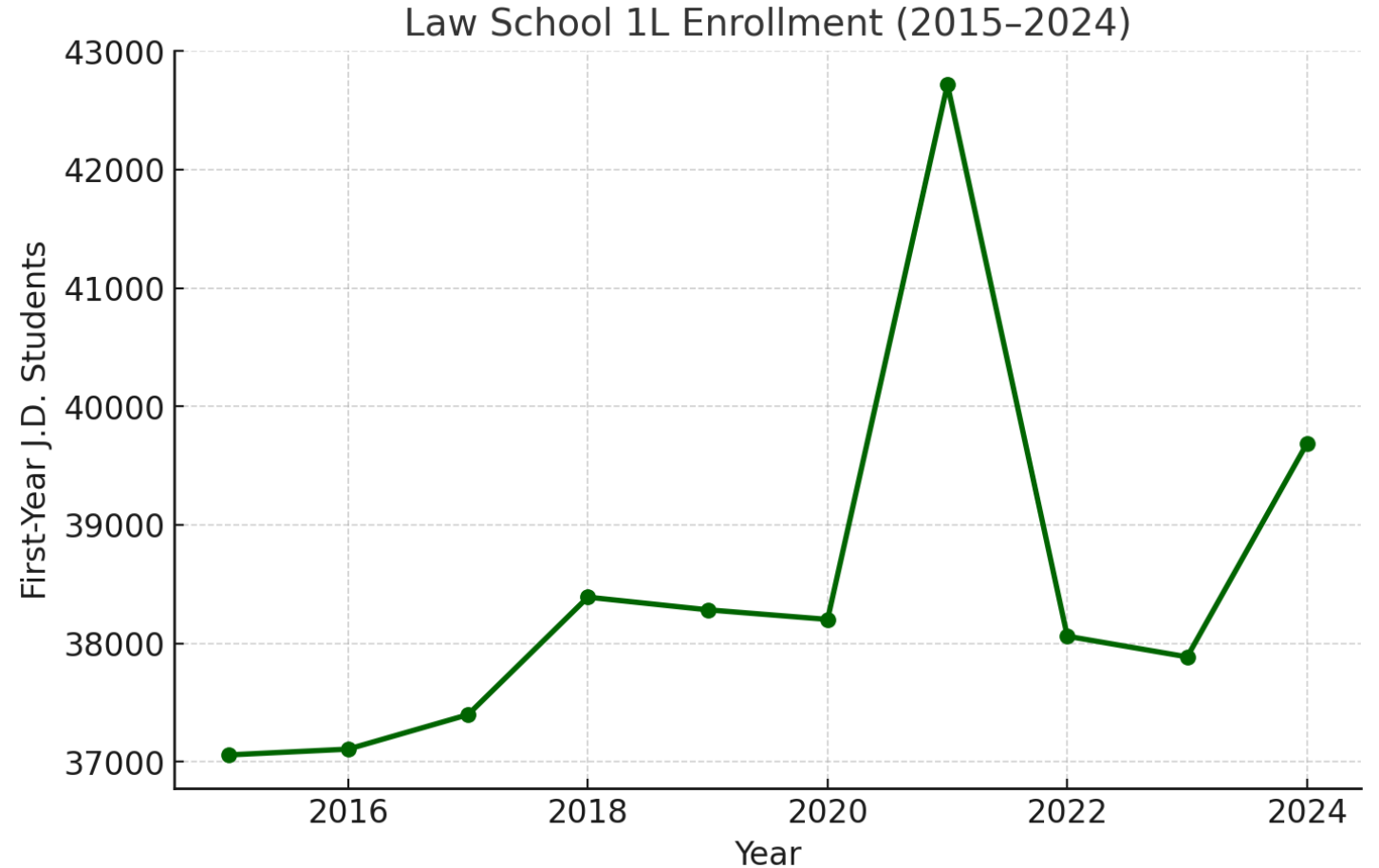
Ally Simels  
Chair,  
NYSBA  
Young  
Lawyer  
Section

# Panelists

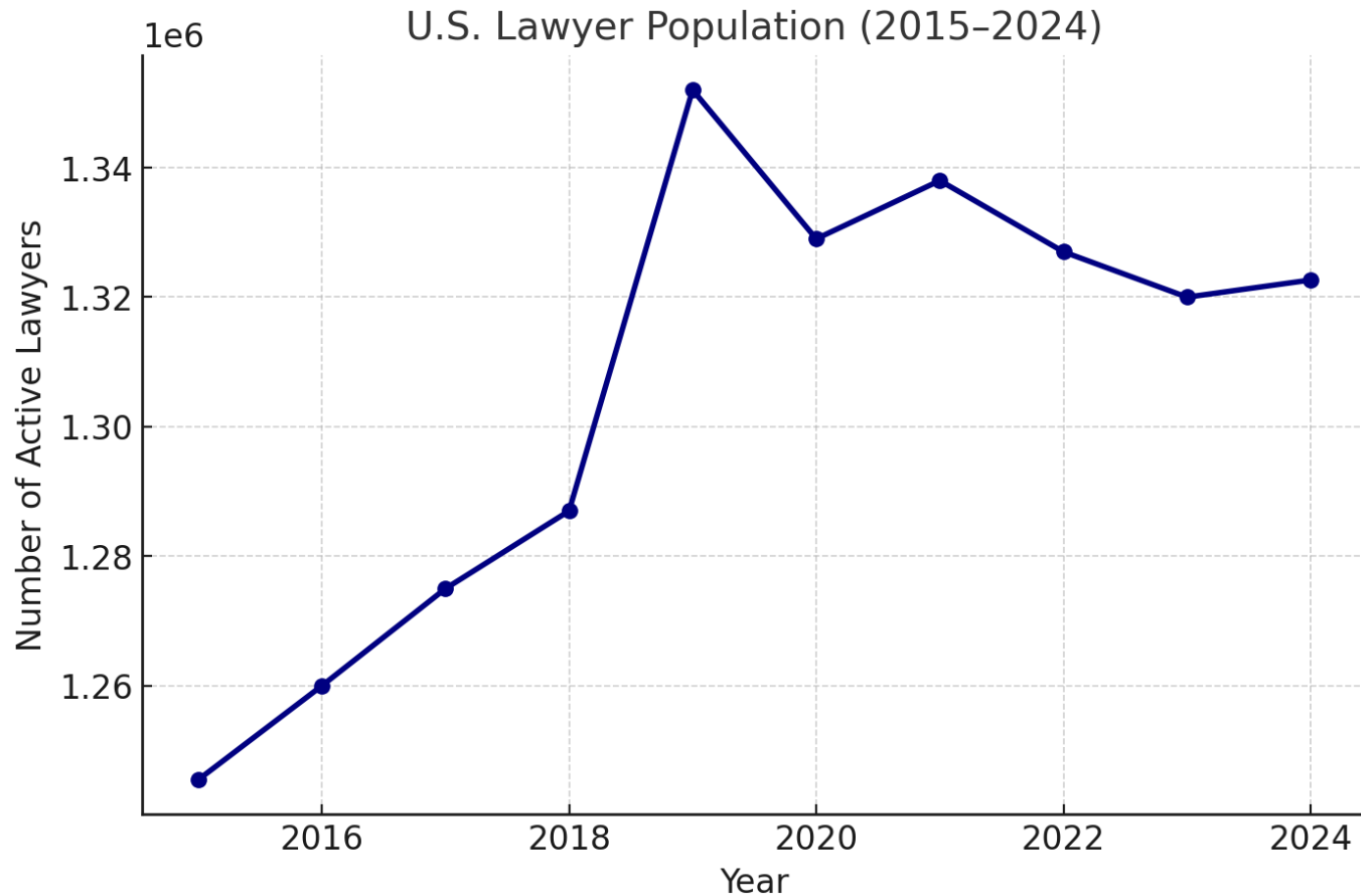
# Trends in Law School Enrollment

## Key Insights:

- Enrollment bottomed around 37k (2015–2017)
- Stabilized near 38k through 2020
- 2021 saw a major spike to 42.7k
- Numbers dipped in 2022–23, rebounded in 2024 (~39.7k)



# Trend in Lawyer Population



## Key Insights:

- Slow but steady growth since 2015 (~1.25M → 1.32M+)
- 2019 showed a spike above 1.35M
- Pandemic years saw small dips but profession stabilized
- Overall: about 7% growth in 10 years

## Demographic Cliff: Declining Numbers of Potential Attorneys

### The Looming Enrollment Cliff

Number of 18 Year Olds



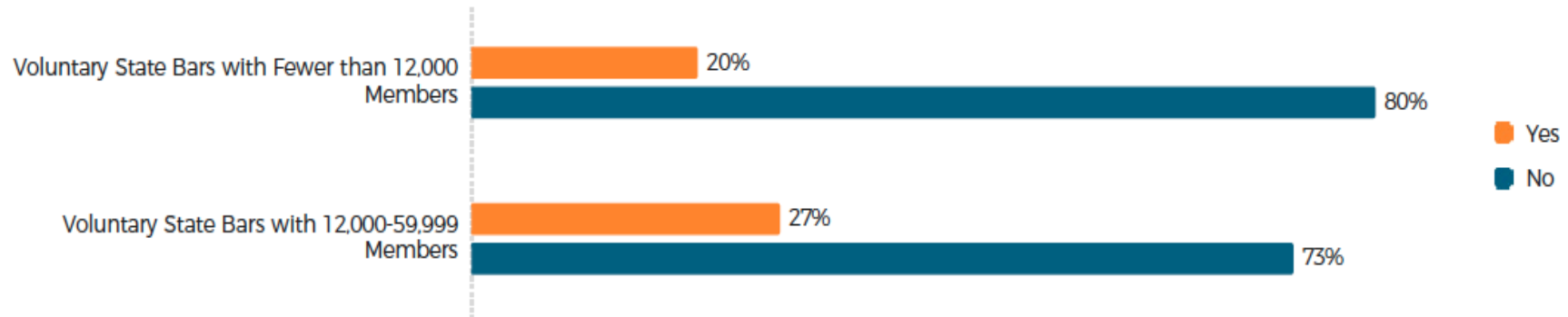
Sources: College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (2023); The Higher Education Demand Index (Grawe, 2016)

# VOLUNTARY BARS STATISTICS OVERVIEW

## Membership Size, Inactive Members, & Retention Rate

What is the total membership of your bar organization?	Min	Max	Mean	Median	Responses
Voluntary State Bars with Fewer than 12,000 Members	2,350	10,500	5,395	4,884	10
Voluntary State Bars with 12,000-59,999 Members	12,408	55,000	23,796	21,307	11

Voluntary State Bars with an Inactive Member Category:



How many inactive members does your bar organization have?	Min	Max	Mean	Median	Responses
Voluntary State Bars with Fewer than 12,000 Members	301	1286	794	794	2
Voluntary State Bars with 12,000-59,999 Members	319	626	438	368	3



## Audience Poll #1

Who joined a bar association before age 30?



## Audience Poll #2

Who served as an officer or leader in their young lawyers section?



## Audience Poll #3

Who benefited from a bar association mentorship or fellowship?



## Audience Poll #4

How many dropped off and came back?

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# Understanding Generational Shifts

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## Recruiting Younger Lawyers

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# Retaining Members through All Career Stages

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- **Panel Summary**
- **Audience Questions**
- **AUDIENCE CHALLENGE!**

# Resources

Below are links to more generic association-generational and member development articles as well as one from the World Economic Forum.

[Article on Generational Differences](#) from the World Economic Forum.

ASAE [“New Age for Associations”](#)

ASAE [“Bridging Generations in Associations”](#)

ASEA [“Creativity and Innovation: Pillars of Association Membership”](#)

Higher Logic [“Association Trends and Forecasts”](#)

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## **From First Impressions to Lasting Engagement:**

Onboarding Strategies That Drive Member Retention Beyond the Welcome

2:15 pm – 3:15 pm

**Moderator**

**Vlad Frants, Esq.**

Executive Council – Network of Bar Leaders

Ukrainian American Bar Association

**Harvey Hurdle**  
Retired Executive  
Director  
Philadelphia Bar  
Association



**James P. Joseph Esq.**  
President  
Nassau County Bar  
Association



**Yang Chen, Esq.**  
Former President and Current  
Executive Director, Asian American  
Bar Association of New York



## Panelists

# Philadelphia Bar Association Strategic Insights

Initiative: Institutional  
Membership Program

- law school partners Drexel and Temple, offering complimentary membership to all law students and staff who are attorneys
- City Law Department, District Attorney's Office and the Defender Association
- legal services agencies




A photograph of three diverse professionals—two men and one woman—wearing glasses and smiling as they look at tablets together. The woman in the center has red hair and is wearing glasses. The man on the left is wearing a light blue shirt and glasses. The man on the right is wearing a blue shirt and glasses. They are all looking at tablets, with the woman in the center holding one and the man on the right holding another. The background is bright and out of focus.

# Philadelphia Bar Association Strategic Insights

Initiative: Improving member experience

- adding an On-Demand CLE platform
- offering Decisis, a complimentary legal research tool



# Nassau County Bar Association Strategic Insights

## Planning Conference

- EC committed to
  - taking the necessary steps to increase both Bar membership and revenue by 10%
  - creating systems to help ensure continued future success

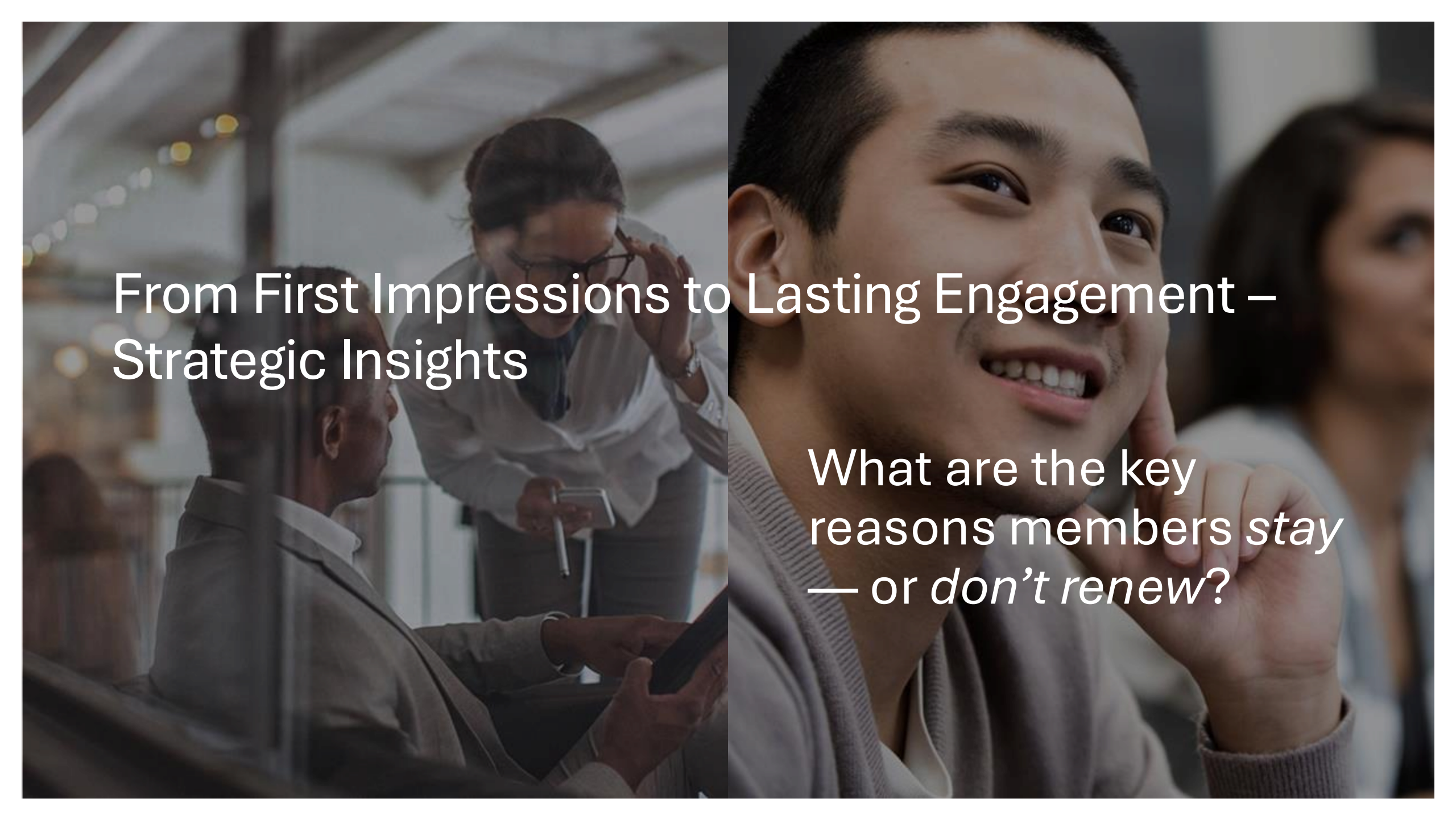


# Asian American Bar Association of New York – Strategic Insights

Be Strategically Focused on growth

- Membership doubled in ten years
- Executive Director to provide organizational continuity
- Mentorship of young attorneys and law students





From First Impressions to Lasting Engagement –  
Strategic Insights

What are the key  
reasons members *stay*  
— or *don't renew*?



## From First Impressions to Lasting Engagement – Strategic Insights

How do you keep mid-career or senior attorneys engaged once the novelty of joining wears off?



## From First Impressions to Lasting Engagement – Strategic Insights

What kinds of programs have you found most successful in driving both engagement and renewals?



## From First Impressions to Lasting Engagement – Strategic Insights

How are you using technology or online platforms to enhance member engagement?

From First  
Impressions to  
Lasting Engagement –  
Strategic Insights



If you could go back and change one thing about how your bar approaches membership, what would it be?

# From First Impressions to Lasting Engagement – Strategic Insights

What's one 'don't do this' piece of advice you'd give to other bar leaders?



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# Questions?

# NETWORKING BREAK



3:15 – 3:30 pm



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## **Passing the Gavel:**

Creating a Strategic Playbook for Seamless Leadership Transitions in Bar

Associations

3:30 pm – 4:30 pm

**Moderator**

**Elizabeth Post**

Executive Director

Nassau County Bar Association

# Speaker

**David Schizer, Esq.**  
Harvey R. Miller Professor  
of Law and Economics  
and Dean Emeritus,  
Columbia Law School

Author, *How to Save the  
World in Six (Not So Easy)  
Steps: Bringing Out the  
Best in Nonprofits*



The banner features a light blue background with silhouettes of people in various professional poses. Overlaid on these are several circular icons: some show a single person, others show a group of people, and some include a bar chart. A network of thin lines connects these icons, suggesting a community or organizational structure.

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## Passing the Gavel:

Creating a Strategic Playbook for Seamless Leadership  
Transitions in Bar Associations

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# Questions?

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## **Workshop:**

Creating a Strategic Playbook for Seamless Leadership Transitions in Bar

Associations

4:30 pm – 5:30 pm

**Moderator**

**Elizabeth Post**

Executive Director

Nassau County Bar Association

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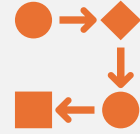
**4:30 – 5:00 p.m.**

- **Workshop:** Bar Leaders will work together to create a Draft of a Strategic Leadership Transition Playbook

**5:00 – 5:30 p.m.**

- **Report-Out:** Attendees will report out their work

# Workshop Instructions: Strategic Leadership Transition Playbook



## Identify Key Transition Phases

Break down leadership transitions into stages. List essential tasks and timelines for each phase.



## Define Roles and Responsibilities

Assign specific duties to outgoing leaders, incoming leaders, and support teams.



## Incorporate Best Practices

Integrate proven strategies discussed during the session, such as succession planning and contingency plans for unexpected changes.



## Workshop: Reporting Out

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RECEPTION

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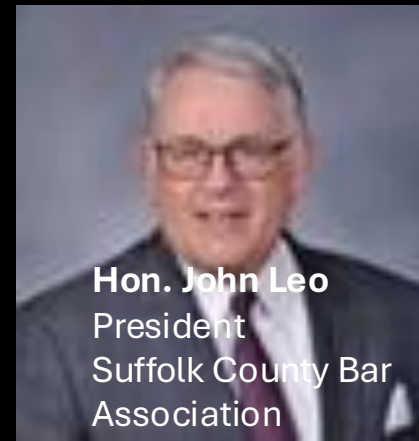
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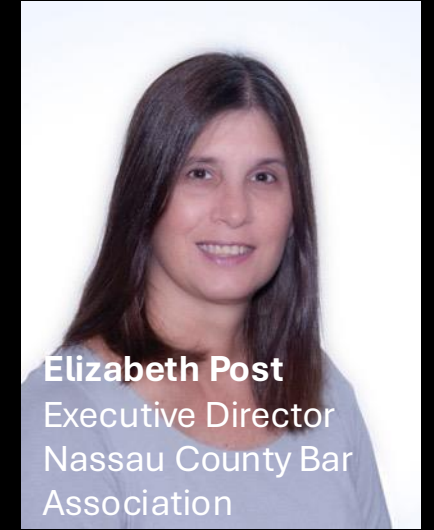
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WELCOME

# Thank you Fall Conference Planning Team



**Hon. John Leo**  
President  
Suffolk County Bar  
Association



**Elizabeth Post**  
Executive Director  
Nassau County Bar  
Association



**Vlad Frants**  
Executive Council  
Network of Bar  
Leaders

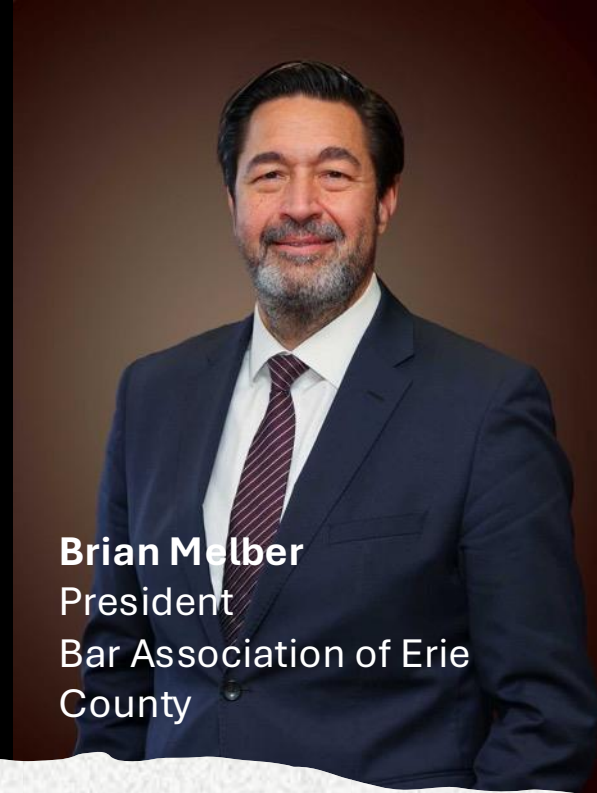




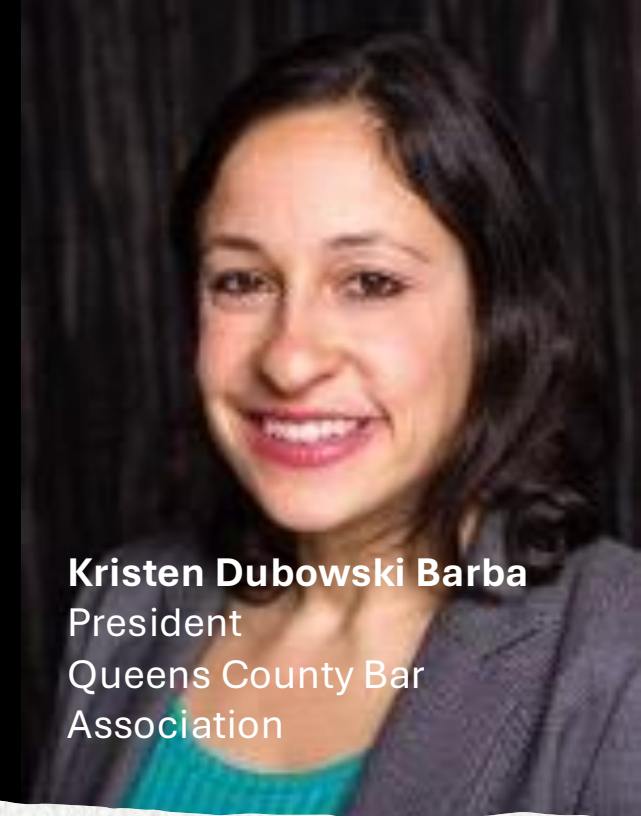
**Renee L. Behrens**  
President  
Capital District Women's Bar  
Association



**David Lacher**  
President  
New Rochelle Bar  
Association



**Brian Melber**  
President  
Bar Association of Erie  
County



**Kristen Dubowski Barba**  
President  
Queens County Bar  
Association

**Thank you  
Awards Subcommittee**



Thank you!

- Linda Kemble and New York City Bar Association for hosting
- Ron Katter, President of Network of Bar Leaders
- Kim McHargue, NYSBA Staff Liaison
- Elizabeth Derrico, ABA Bar Leaders Institute

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AWARD  
CEREMONY



# Asian American Bar Association of New York

Innovation Award  
Winners

Smaller Bar Association  
Annual Wellness Program

# Innovation Award Winners

Larger Bar Association:

Program to Educate and Train Community  
on Opioid Use Disorder



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**CLOSING  
REMARKS**

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HAVE A GOOD  
EVENING!