



PRESIDENT'S PAGE

CHRISTINA M. ZABAT-FRAN

Like a Fine Wine

“Just as wine becomes richer as it ages,
so too does the bond between good friends.”

~ Unknown

Sometimes the impact you make is learned far after you've started.

Well, thank goodness for the Honorable Franz Miller (Ret.), Past President and dear friend, who always reminds me to take the long view. These were the exact words I needed to hear as I considered my own legacy as bar president.

When there are a seemingly infinite number of ideas to pursue, how can you tell what will truly matter? What does it mean to make an impact, let alone make a difference?

Over the years, Judge Miller has regaled me with stories of his own adventures as bar president. Now, I will not attempt to recount them here, as I could not do them justice, but I will say, among many things, it includes appearing on the Today Show! I encourage you to ask him yourself.

I will share with you the punch line: In everything you do, every place you pay attention, and every conversation you have, you are building a foundation for the impact of others. What better legacy is there than that?

Judge Miller and I have also built up quite the photo album—we have a tradition to

capture a moment together at (nearly) every bar event we attend.

Judge Miller has been widely recognized for his impact in our community over the years, including as an honoree by the OCBA Charitable Fund in 2021. For those of you who were there, you'll recall how his acceptance speech brought down the house.

Which brings me to this year's Raise Your Glass, the capstone summer evening to the OCBA Charitable Fund's yearlong efforts to provide financial resources to local organizations that serve the community and reinforce the fund's mission to enhance the system of justice.

While the Charitable Fund and its predecessor organizations have had many iterations for its annual benefit over the decades, it's thanks to Past President Nikki Miliband that this most successful, must-support evening was brought to life. Over ten years running, Raise Your Glass has become a wonderful tradition within our OC legal community.

In fact, Nikki astoundingly has chaired over fifteen years of these fabulous, fundraising extravaganzas—with only a brief intermission when she was presiding over all efforts as president, which I can personally confirm is not a real pause at all.

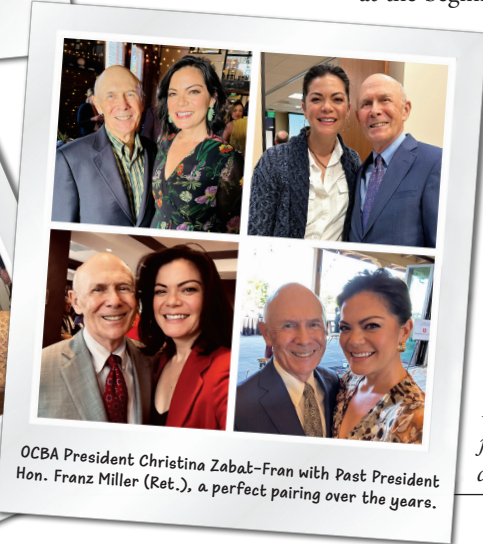
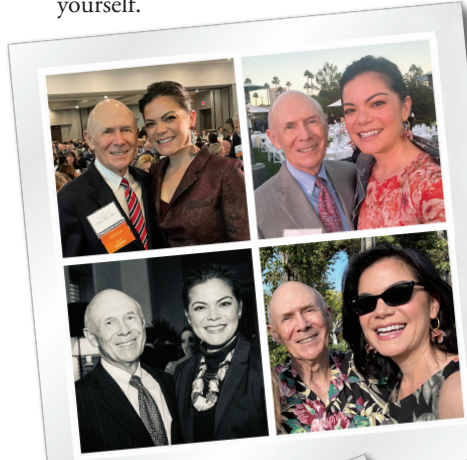
I myself have had the great opportunity to get involved—as a volunteer, as wine committee co-chair, as Raise Your Glass co-chair, and even as host in 2020 when we went virtual. Every vintage just gets better, and I have no doubt this year's co-chairs, Sharon Oh-Kubisch and Eric Traut, will take it to new heights! If you are searching for a way to give back, I encourage you to support the Charitable Fund.

Looking back at traditions built over the years and my favorite selfies with Judge Miller, I'm reminded of the simple call to action I set out at the beginning of this year: *Let's be the very best we can be, help a lot of people, and have a lot of fun.* Perhaps the rest will take care of itself.

The summer will soon come to a close, and I'm very proud of the great work our OCBA community has taken on this year thus far.

With so much to raise our glasses to, allow me to end with a toast: May your glass always be half full, and may your impact be bigger than you ever thought it could be.

Christina M. Zabat-Fran, the 2024 President of the OCBA, is also a French Wine Scholar and founder of In Vino Veritas wine society at her alma mater. Will you join her in a toast at Raise Your Glass? Her email is christina.zabat@lanvin-group.com.



OCBA President Christina Zabat-Fran with Past President Hon. Franz Miller (Ret.), a perfect pairing over the years.