



2023 Q1 CCAL Board of Governors President's Message

Dear Fellows and Community Association Law Counsel,

After the successful and engaging 2023 Community Association Law Seminar in New Orleans, it is my pleasure to provide the following first-quarter 2023 update on behalf of the Board of Governors of CAI's College of Community Association Lawyers (CCAL): Brendan Bunn, Elina Gilbert, Daniel Miske, Laurie Poole, Augustus Shaw, and Amy Tinetti.

I would like to congratulate 2022 President Laurie Poole on her accomplishments with CCAL last year and thank her for her excellent leadership and service. Laurie's courage to initiate conversations about mental health and wellness paid great dividends over the course of her presidency with several interesting classes presented and multiple conversations on the topic. Given our chosen area of expertise, and the stresses and conflict that come with it, I believe that we need to continue normalizing conversations about attorney mental health and wellness.

I am truly honored to lead CCAL in 2023 and explore how, as an organization, we can educate and support community association lawyers. As I said in my rambling introduction at the Law Seminar, I believe the College can be best served over the next year by asking and answering these three questions:

1. How do we serve an increasingly diverse and vibrant population of owners?
2. How do we serve an increasingly divided and contentious society?
3. How do we support each other?

I realize it is easier to ask these questions than to answer them. However, the College and CAI are working on each of these topics. For example, the College has put on several classes on DEI and mental health, such as *Overcoming Racism in Community Associations* and *Brain Waves: Science Behind Attorney Wellness and Mindfulness Practices*, to name a few. On the topic of conflict, I recently taught my Meeting Martial Arts class as a webinar and there were at least four "watch parties" held with over 100 attendees each as community professionals and volunteer leaders learned how to address conflict gracefully. I think we are just scratching the surface on how to manage conflict, which goes together with attorney wellness.

2023 Community Association Law Seminar. My sincere thanks to everyone who presented at the 2023 Law Seminar. Every individual involved with this year's event was critical to its success, and it is not lost on us that the Law Seminar would not exist without your contributions. Your time, insight, and preparation were well-received and are still being applauded by attendees.

I'd also like to acknowledge the great work of the Law Seminar Planning Committee and thank its co-chairs Tom Murray, Amy Tinetti, and Susan Tarley. We look forward to seeing everyone next year for the 2024 Community Association Law Seminar, February 14-17, 2024, in Las Vegas. I appreciate CAI's experiment in holding the Law Seminar slightly later in the year to create a little breathing room after the holidays. Learn more about next year's Law Seminar [here](#).

[Case Law Update and Online Directory](#). Many thanks to Jeffrey Kaman and all the members of the Case Law Update team for their time-consuming work throughout 2022. The team compiled community association case law from across the country that was presented at the 2021 Law Seminar to include in CAI's online Case Law



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Database. I have some inkling of how much work these great people on the Case Law Update team contribute to a successful Law Seminar and I'd like to express my continued gratitude for the vital role that they play in keeping us informed.

Congratulations Marvin Nodiff. It was my honor to present Marvin Nodiff with the Don Buck Lifetime Achievement Award. The award recognizes community association practitioners who have made extraordinary contributions to community association law and practice. The award is a very fitting and well-deserved acknowledgement of Marv's significant involvement with CAI and the community association industry for so many years. There were several copies of Marv's novels circulating around Law Seminar, and if you have not had the privilege of reading about our unique area of practice (which could only be truly understood by a practitioner of many years like Marv), I encourage you to do so.

Best Manuscript Award. The Law Seminar Manuscript Committee is working to identify the 2023 Best Manuscript Award. This is the 10th year the CCAL Board of Governors will present this award, which recognizes the scholarly efforts of our talented lawyers. Past recipients include myself and Steven S. Weil (2014); James H. Slaughter (2015); Marion A. Aaron and Allen B. Warren (2016); Daniela Burg, Edward Hoffman Jr., and Gerald C. Wigger (2017); Matt Ober and Amy Tinetti (2018); Kevin Hirzel, Edward Hoffman Jr., Michael S. Karpoff, and Todd A. Sinkins (2019); Elina B. Gilbert and Kevin M. Hirzel (2020); Leah K. Burton, Noelle Hicks, and Wil Washington (2021), Leah K. Burton, and Noelle Hicks (2022).

2023 CAI Annual Conference and Exposition: Community NOW – Save the Date! CAI is 50! CAI is proud to announce the 2023 Annual Conference and Exposition: Community NOW, to be held May 17-20 at Hilton Anatole in Dallas, Texas. Preconference education courses will take place May 15-16. I will be teaching the M-204 with the great Ursula Burgess on Monday and Tuesday of the conference. If you will be in Dallas early, don't hesitate to drop by and share a war story or an experience with the managers in the room.

CCAL Fellow Applications Due June 30. The CCAL membership applications deadline is June 30. Applicants are required to have completed a minimum of eight years of legal practice with a demonstrated focus in community association law, five of which must immediately precede the date of application. They also must be a member of CAI and have attended at least three Law Seminars within the past 10 years, with one in the last three years, and demonstrated significant leadership and involvement in the provision of legal services to community associations through the attainment of 12 out of a possible 15 points in the evaluated application categories. For those who were present at the CCAL business meeting in New Orleans, you know we talked about changing the Law Seminar attendance requirement based on the feedback from two fellows. This is an issue that the Board of Governors discussed at its last meeting. While no immediate change in the requirements is planned, the Board of Governors is always seeking feedback from its fellows to make the College work for them. I believe that growth is good for the College and for the communities we serve. The challenge is doing so responsibly and in a manner that does not dilute the very special nature of being admitted as a fellow.

CCAL Mentors. I encourage everyone to volunteer to participate in the CCAL Mentor program. The program helps lawyers new to our industry in developing skills unique to the practice of community association law, provides networking opportunities, and guides lawyers toward completing their application to become a CCAL fellow. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Phoebe Neseth at pneseth@caionline.org.



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What's on your mind? The CCAL Board of Governors and I want to know how we are doing and any thoughts, comments, or ideas you have. Please reach out at any time to me at dgraf@moellergraf.com.

My best wishes for a safe and healthy spring.



David Graf, Esq., CCAL
President, College of Community Association Lawyers (CCAL)