

# RAISING THE BAR

NORTHEAST HARRIS COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION (NEHCBA)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Benjamin K. Sanchez



In this initial President's Message, I'd like to introduce myself and my goals for this bar year. I am in my 21st year of law practice and have spent most of those years working for myself. I focus on litigation in civil, business, consumer, family, and criminal matters. I used to have a very niche practice in high-volume debt collection litigation, but I find I like practicing in multiple areas while either referring out or joint-venturing in those cases that I cannot or do not want to handle on my own.

I graduated from the University of Texas in 1994 with a Bachelor of Arts Degree, majoring in Government and minoring in

Business Management. I then attended the University of Houston Law Center, graduating in December 1997, after having taken a semester off in my 2L year to care for my ill wife at the time. After taking and passing the bar exam and MPRE in 1998, I was licensed in September of 1998.

Although I have practiced all over Texas, I have had offices in only Houston or Dallas in my career. I also worked for a firm in Dallas and another in Houston for a total of 4 years. The rest of my career has been spent operating my own firm, from a solo attorney with no staff to three associates and a dozen staff. I currently office in the Montrose area of Houston and have a staff of three with no associates.

I have been active in bar associations since my law school days. I founded the first ever student chapter of the Texas Trial Lawyers Association in my 1L summer and ran that for two years while being active in student organizations and bar associations. I have led various bar committees and projects. I have also been the President of

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

All CLE Luncheons take place on the 2nd Friday of the month at Los Cucos Restaurant, beginning at 11:45 a.m. Cost is \$25.00 for members; \$35.00 for non-members.

You can pre-register (and pre-pay) online at [www.nehcba.org](http://www.nehcba.org).

1/11/2019:

Capital Digital  
Cellphone Forensics

2/8/2019:

Joseph D. Lawson  
Solo and General Practice Tools  
Harris County Law Library

January 1, 2019

[www.nehcba.org](http://www.nehcba.org)

local and state bar associations and am currently active in the Houston Bar Association and the American Bar Association. Suffice it to say that I keep my plate full, some may say too full.

I joined NEHCBA a couple of years ago when I was living and running my firm in Kingwood. Since then, I have moved my home and office back to Houston. When I decided to make the three-year commitment to become President of our bar association, I wanted to focus on increasing membership and putting systems in place to help our future leaders.

Starting with last year, our NEHCBA board has been better about putting notices on the website and creating email lists for the Board Members to communicate more effectively. This year, we are beginning the project to upload all of association's historical documents on the website as well as putting a system in place to upload our monthly board meeting minutes, treasurer's reports, and

announcements on the website. I hope to end my term as President with a website that truly acts as the communication hub and document repository of our association, thus allowing our leaders and members to not have to pass down papers and binders from one board to another.

My second focus on membership has been slow-moving. Although last year we were able to obtain a list of attorneys in our local zip codes from the State Bar of Texas, the list did not contain email addresses. Our Treasurer, Kristi Burleigh, has maintained a list of members and

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local attorneys and we have been using that to communicate our notices. However, we have only 17 paid members, which is woefully inadequate if this

association is going to survive, much less thrive. I encourage everyone reading this President's Message to join or renew your membership with NEHCBA and send me the names and contact information of at least three attorneys to whom I may directly communicate in order to encourage them to join. I would like to close our bar year and start next bar year with at least 50 paid memberships. That is an ambitious goal considering how few we have, but there are more than enough attorneys in the area to meet this goal. If you have received value from NEHCBA, I encourage you to send me your testimonials so that I may use them in marketing to potential members.

We still have two-thirds of our 2018-2019 bar year left, so I hope you have enjoyed the holidays and are ready to contribute to the building of your local bar association by joining or renewing your membership, attending our functions, and encouraging others to join!

## EVENTS

### Upcoming speakers

#### January 11, 2019

Capital Digital will be speaking to us on the topic of Cellphone Forensics: Applications in Discovery and Investigations. Cellphones represent one of the fastest-changing areas of legal practice. Mobile device evidence is more important than ever, thanks to the rapid evolution of the technology and the way this evidence is treated by the courts. Touching on important recent cases, technology developments, and direct experience advising attorneys, this presentation provides up-to-date guidance on the application of cellphone forensics in litigation, investigations, and other legal matters.

**February 8, 2019**

Solo and General Practice Tools at the Harris County Law Library presented by Joseph D. Lawson. This speaker will discuss resources and service at the Harris County Law Library, including tools for legal research, law practice management, and learning legal technology. He will also touch on the strengths and weaknesses of various legal research platforms, best practices for finding good law efficiently across various platforms, and strategies for incorporating free legal research tools and other, more expensive tools, available for free at the Law Library.

**March 8, 2019**

Janice Berg, newly-elected presiding judge of the 247th Judicial District Court, and possibly other Family Court judges, will discuss policies and procedures in the family law courts.

**April 12, 2019**

Jennifer Correro will discuss immigration and asylum laws

HAPPY HOURS

Monthly Happy Hour on the Wednesday following our monthly luncheon at The Union Kitchen.

Starts at 5:30 and continues until we go home! Join your colleagues for fun and fellowship!

Happy Hours for the first quarter are:

January 16, 2019

February 20, 2019

March 20, 2019

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BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

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We know that your time is valuable; therefore, the Northeast Harris County Bar Association (NEHCBA) wants to ensure that your participation and involvement has multiple benefits.

From networking to CLE opportunities, NEHCBA provides a local nexus for you to grow professionally and provides a colleague support system in our area. For example, NEHCBA provides every member an opportunity to showcase their knowledge in our quarterly newsletter. But most importantly, we hope that NEHCBA fosters a sense of community for mentorship, personal growth, referrals as well as friendships.

Practicing law is a challenging endeavor. Whether you are a solo attorney, or you are affiliated with a firm, having a strong and available community of lawyers from all areas of practice of law is an important component to your success. We hope that our local bar association will make the practice of law easier and more enjoyable.

Don't hesitate to reach out to your Board Members if you have any questions or if you need some help!