

## ACC St. Louis Presidential Letter

Summer 2019



I cannot believe summer FINALLY has arrived. With the arrival of summer, I am sure we are all starting to do fun summer activities with our families and friends. For my family, that includes the neighborhood pool, bbq's, hanging out on the deck and playing in the sprinklers (while trying to avoid the aggressive influx of mosquitos). With the growth our chapter has experienced, I thought I would devote this letter to outlining some ways our members can leverage their membership and become more engaged with a focus on the unique offerings the ACC St. Louis Chapter has. It is my hope that our new (or newer) members will find this helpful as an introduction, and our existing members will find it

helpful both as a reminder and to become aware of newer programs of which they may not know existed.

**A Fantastic Network of In-House Lawyers:** The St. Louis Chapter has over 600 members to connect with at a variety of social, professional development, pro bono and CLE events. I have not met a single member who is not enthusiastic about sharing information with their peers about resources, professional opportunities, or how their company is handling a difficult issue that other companies may also be dealing with. What a great resource to have in our organization! In addition, as a member, you have access to other members across the country and internationally. Connecting at the ACC Annual Meeting or through the directory on the ACC website is easy and well worth the time.

**St. Louis Chapter Signature Events:** Our chapter hosts four signature events every year. At our Summer Social at O'Fallon Brewery on July 18th, you can enjoy sharing a cold beer and delicious appetizers with colleagues in a fun atmosphere. This year we have added a fun Pro Bono feature to the event with a Backpack Drive which will help provide school supplies for the St. Louis Public School Students in Transition Initiative, which helps supply homeless students with necessities for the upcoming school year. Our Golf Spa Event on September 13th is extremely popular – not only can you get some great CLE credit, you have the opportunity to enjoy the wonderful spa services at the Four Seasons or a fun round of golf with other members and sponsors. At our Holiday Party, held at in December at Fleming's, you can enjoy the elegant atmosphere while enjoying gourmet offerings and beautifully crafted cocktails and delicious wines. Finally, you can meet a significant portion of your annual CLE requirement by attending our highly acclaimed Corporate Counsel Institute at the Ritz Carlton which was held on May 15th this year. We consistently get outstanding feedback from our membership about these events and they provide a great opportunity to build a meaningful network and make good friends. Mark your calendars; we would love to see you!

**Chapter Professional Development Workshops:** Recognizing that as in-house counsel, we are increasingly called upon to play a key role in our organizations' strategic business decisions and to have business expertise and a level of emotional intelligence to effectively interact with business people at the highest level of our companies, our chapter has expanded its focus on professional development. We have held half day seminars taught by professors at Washington University's highly regarded Olin School of Business Executive MBA Program. In addition, the chapter offers monthly classes and mini-

workshops covering topics like the impact of sleep on ones well-being, communication styles, using LinkedIn to maximize your brand, and c-suite leadership and how we and how we can make an positive impact and get a seat at the table. These events are led by respected experts and are focused on providing members with soft skills and tools for success.

**Relevant, Timely and Complimentary CLE Offerings:** Our sponsors include some of the most highly respected law firms in the metro area, the region, and the country. And we work closely with them to provide our members with several CLE offerings over the course of the year. These CLE programs cover a variety of topics and are focused on providing information in a way that is useful and relevant to in-house counsel. Our Gold Sponsors include: Thompson Coburn (also our Diversity sponsor), Armstrong Teasdale, Husch Blackwell, Greensfelder, Hemker & Gale, Stinson and Ogletree Deakins. Our Silver Sponsors include: Baker McKenzie, Gowling WLG, Lathrop Gage, Lewis Rice, SmithAmundson, and Tueth Keeney.

**Diversity:** Many of you and your organizations remain focused on increasing diversity in your legal departments and understanding how to manage bias (both conscious and unconscious). Our chapter has offered workshops and hosts a variety of gatherings to discuss how we can effectively turn the dial on eliminating barriers both in the in-house practice of law and in the legal community generally. We have developed structured programs to open the pipeline to legal careers to local youth through our annual Summer Internship Program and our annual Street Law Program, inviting members from all different industries to give diverse students at the law school and high school levels valuable exposure to our practices and what it takes to succeed. Hosting an intern or volunteering for Street Law is extremely rewarding for both the students and our members.

**Fun Pop-Up Social Events:** Several times a year, we offer small events of (generally) 25 or fewer members, that enable you to do something fun and network with other members in a more relaxed and social setting. At these events our members have enjoyed sushi/sake tastings, learned about craft bourbons, painted, enjoyed manicures and pedicures with a nice glass of wine and cheeses, and gathered with family members at Ted Drewes for a cold concrete on a hot evening. There are always a number of unique and diverse events every year that cater to the wide variety of interests of our members.

**Well-Organized Local Pro-Bono Opportunities:** Our chapter and its members have been recognized by the Mayor of St. Louis for their substantial contributions to the community. If you would enjoy learning about pro bono opportunities and want to participate in manageable projects and efforts that will fit into your busy schedule, our chapter offers rewarding pro bono and volunteer opportunities throughout the year through our partnerships with Legal Services of Eastern Missouri, The St. Louis Urban Debate League and Street Law (among others). Participating in these efforts is fulfilling and a great way to meet other members.

**Outstanding National Resources:** Many of our members attend the ACC Annual Meeting, the largest gathering of in-house counsel in the world. The meeting offers an extraordinary array of CLE seminars and classes. The networking and social events at the meeting are also not to be missed. Members have access to a plethora of resources tailored to the needs of in-house lawyers in all practice areas – forms, policies, primers, quick reference guides, surveys, webcasts, podcasts, videos and other educational programming, sample contract and forms, infopaks, materials on law department management and technology, just to name a few. Investing a little time to explore these and other online resources will

pay off in spades. The site also has a directory of members worldwide. You can also access the Docket, ACC's monthly magazine, on the website.

I am extremely proud of all the hard work that our Board members and their committee members undertake so that we can continue to have such a strong chapter that provides its members with an outstanding value by offering quality programming and resources, as well as plenty of opportunities to build a strong professional network. And I would be remiss if I did not express, on behalf of myself and all of our members, the appreciation we have for our sponsors who make of our programs and activities possible.

So, while you are enjoying the sun and fun of summer, I hope to see you at the Summer Social or at another event in the coming weeks!

Chrissy Teske

2019 ACC St. Louis Chapter President