

# WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

## Board of Governors May 2023 Meeting Update

*A summary prepared by the WSBA of the Board of Governors (Board) meeting held May 19-20 in Yakima. The agenda, materials, and video recording from this Board meeting are [online](#). The next regular meeting is June 23-24 in Vancouver, Washington. The Board of Governors is WSBA's governing body charged with determining general policies of the WSBA and approving its annual budget. To subscribe to the Board Meeting Notification list, email [barleaders@wsba.org](mailto:barleaders@wsba.org).*

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### NEED TO KNOW

1. **Ground-Breaking President-Elect.** [Sunitha Anjilvel](#), current Board of Governor for District 1, was elected the next President-Elect. When she assumes the Presidency in fiscal year 2025, she will be the WSBA's sixth female President and first female President of color. Congratulations, Sunitha!
2. **The Long-Term Future of WSBA Office Space.** The state bar's current office lease expires at the end of 2026, and a top priority of the Board's is planning for the long-term future of WSBA space—one that best serves members by being financially responsible and available to support members statewide. The Board's most recent discussion was about how to reduce its current footprint in downtown Seattle, rent-versus-buy options, and geographic location considerations. The Board plans to continue the conversation when it meets in June. ([See page 235.](#))

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### OTHER BUSINESS

**Local Hero and Other Accolades.** The WSBA honored [Tammy Granados as a Local Hero](#) for her exceptional commitment to serving immigrant families in the Yakima area. The Local Hero Award is bestowed by the WSBA President, in partnership with county bar associations, to recognize colleagues who make noteworthy contributions to their communities. WSBA President Daniel D. Clark also honored Richard (Dick) Johnson, a highly respected trial lawyer and community member in Yakima who recently passed away. Yakima City Council member Patricia Byers, on behalf of the entire Council, honored WSBA President Daniel D. Clark for his leadership, his commitment to the legal profession and Yakima community, and public service as a Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney in Yakima County.

**Priority on Member Wellness.** Stress. Addiction. Burnout. Depression. There are many statistics that show the legal profession struggles with well-being. Led by the President of the Institute for Lawyer Well Being Chris Newbold, the Board of Governors took a deep dive into best practices to combat those trends. The Board ultimately voted to make member well-being a strategic priority, with the first step being formation of a task force to study the issue of member wellbeing and report back findings. The task force will expand the WSBA's reach and understanding by bringing together many stakeholders to talk about the state of wellness in the legal community, with the objective of exploring and recommending solutions to the identified trends. The Board's Member Engagement Council will shepherd this new task force, and a draft charter will come back to the Board soon. (See page [139](#).)

**WSBA Deskbooks.** The Board of Governor's Long Range Strategic Planning Committee recommended that deskbooks be offered online for free to members. The Board voted to send the idea to the Member Engagement Committee to continue to explore the idea and solicit member feedback.

**A Crisis in Rural Courts.** Judicial and lawyer representatives spoke about the "crisis level" they have reached in Yakima because of the lack of local attorneys. One repercussion, among many, is that clients are waiting months for arraignments because they cannot promptly get appointed counsel. In response to this growing dearth of lawyers in rural areas, the WSBA created the [Small Town and Rural Practice \(STAR\) Committee](#) last year. Representatives from the STAR Committee presented some of their success over the past year, including a successful rural job fair and gathering small-town practitioners together to share ideas and resources. In the year to come, the STAR Committee hopes to do more outreach to law schools and explore school-loan forgiveness programs and rule changes to the Law Clerk program to support rural lawyers. (See page [134](#).)

**The Board also:**

- Held a training—"Advancing Equity in Aging through Law and Policy"—about supporting and protecting the rights of older adults and combating agism, led by Denny Chen, the managing director of Equity Advocacy. (See page [95](#).)
- Further defined the scope and metrics to develop a WSBA program review, a process to evaluate the mission-focus and effectiveness of bar programs and services. The program review process is a strategic goal for the organization.
- Discussed several bylaw and policy changes, two of which will come back for consideration and potential action: One change would allow WSBA entities to have working sessions, without action, even if quorum is not met; and another change would require a certain number of Board meetings to be held at the WSBA headquarters.
- Met with the local Yakima District & Superior Court judicial officers and

President of the Yakima County Bar Association to discuss relevant issues facing the Yakima County legal community.