

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In 1994, I had the great privilege of starting my career as a law clerk in the Office of Administrative Law Judges at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. It was there that I was introduced to the idea of entering into the practice of “energy law,” which I admittedly knew little about at that time. With the help of the wonderful ALJs who I was assigned to work with, Judges Joseph Nancy and Jerome Nelson, and other ALJs and staff members in the office, I began to learn something about the energy industry and the way that the FERC regulates energy industry participants. An important adjunct to that teaching was dropped into my lap, although I really did not think much about it at the time.

Chief Judge Wagner always made it a point to allow all of the law clerks in the Office of Administrative Law Judges to attend Energy Bar Association activities—in particular, the Annual Meeting and the Midyear Meeting. It was there that I began to see a broader world of energy practice and to meet so many of the people who have served the profession with such great distinction. After twenty years practicing in this area, including a move from Washington, D.C. to Houston along the way, I have been lucky enough to work with and get to know practitioners throughout the energy world. Over the years, I have been involved in a variety of EBA activities at the national level, through the Houston Chapter, and through participation in a number of the EBA's committees. During my time as EBA Vice President, President-Elect, and now President, my opportunity to learn about the hard work of all those involved in the organization has only grown. No matter where you look, there are so many EBA members dedicating an incredible amount of time to the success of the EBA, the Charitable Foundation of the EBA, the *Energy Law Journal*, and the Foundation of the ELJ. The contributions that each of these organizations makes to the practice of energy law is quite astonishing and it only continues to grow.

There is no perfect way to cover all of these contributions and so I will not try to do it here. What I will do, however, is take a quick snapshot of one moment in time as it was captured in an earlier President's Message in the ELJ in 2001.¹ There, Paul E. Nordstrom, who since has been honored for his dedication to the EBA and CFEBA through the creation of the Paul E. Nordstrom Award, pointed to the way that the EBA had sought to meet the needs of its members. In looking back at that message, I thought about the way that so many of the identified goals had been met, on the one hand, and yet continue to be a focus of our efforts today, on the other hand. For example, he mentioned the implementation of the EBA's “*Strategic Plan 2000*, a plan [led by then-President Bob Fleishman] intended to significantly broaden the scope of the Association and the services offered to its members.” He further noted that “[s]ymbolic of [that] objective was the change in the Association's name from the Federal Energy Bar Association to the wider-reaching Energy Bar Association.” He mentioned the addition of two new Chapters and highlighted efforts to expand the membership to reach 2,000 by the year 2000. Well, at this point, we have added additional Chapters to the mix, changed our Committees to meet changes in the energy arena and to meet the needs of our evolving membership, and have membership now hovering around 2,500. Yet, we continue to strive for many of the same goals that Paul identified at that time.

1. Paul E. Nordstrom, *President's Message*, 22 Energy L.J. ix-x (Vol. 2, 2001).

Building on the EBA's Second Strategic Plan under former President Dave Doot, Susan Olenchuk and Adrienne Clair, the two most recent past EBA presidents, led the effort to develop and implement a new strategic plan that added to and continued the EBA's efforts to meet its member's needs, consistent with many of the thoughts that Paul had articulated in his President's Message. The current EBA Strategic Plan is summarized on the EBA website.² Notably, the Strategic Goals for 2013-2015 focus on many of the same actions that Paul discussed in 2000:

Goal 1: Educational Programming

EBA members will achieve and maintain professional excellence through subject matter expertise, ethical behavior and leadership in the energy industry.

Goal 2: Networking Opportunities

All members will find readily accessible opportunities to interact collegially with the energy community.

Goal 3: Information Resources

EBA and the public will have efficient, cost-effective access to balanced, accurate, broad-ranging, foundational, cutting-edge, substantive information.

Goal 4: Membership Growth

As a result of growing diversity among energy practitioners, and providing additional educational programming and networking opportunities, EBA will expand its membership.

The EBA remains a strong organization because of the efforts of its members past and present. There is a never-ending desire to do a better job at meeting our members' needs and ensuring that the EBA remains a current and important resource to its membership. Through the hard work of our volunteers throughout the United States, Canada, and beyond, the EBA provides a seemingly endless resource to achieve the core mission of the EBA: promoting "the professional excellence and ethical integrity of its members in the practice, administration, and development of energy laws, regulations and policies by providing: superior educational programming, networking opportunities, and information resources." My hope is that our members will continue to take advantage of these opportunities; will participate in developing educational and networking opportunities; and will tell their friends and colleagues to join the organization to further develop and deepen our overall experience as members. The organization is only strengthened when we have more people, with varied professional interests and focuses, developing our programs and contributing to the *Energy Law Journal*.

Thank you again for giving me the opportunity to work with the EBA, its members, and its dedicated professional staff. I look forward to reading this issue of the *Journal* and to seeing all of you at our Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. on May 5 and 6.

Sincerely,

Jason F. Leif
President, Energy Bar Association

2. *EBA Strategic Plan*, ENERGY BAR ASS'N, <http://www.eba-net.org/about-us/eba-strategic-plan>.