



## President's Message

*Michael L. Resis*

*SmithAmundsen LLC, Chicago*

---

In my last message, I can report to you that the state of our organization is strong.

### Continuing Legal Education

In the past year, the IDC has offered continuing legal education seminars that can make you a better attorney. Due to the leadership of the Events Committee and the various substantive law committees, by the time this column appears, we will have put on or scheduled seminars around the state in such substantive areas as construction, punitive damages, medical malpractice, employment, insurance and ethics. Responding to a felt need, we have also put on our first seminar in legal writing and advocacy, which we held in addition to our annual Spring Seminar and biennial Deposition Academy.

To adapt to a changing marketplace for continuing legal education, we are also incorporating technology in our presentations to serve you better. In the near future, we are planning to rollout a YouTube practice series for members only. The videos will be short—10 to 15 minutes—and not intended for CLE, but cover such diverse topics as settling a case on behalf of a minor; Medicare settlements; preparing a client for mediation; the nuts-and-bolts of a deposition; and practice before the Industrial Commission. Because we know that your practice places many demands on your time, these videos will be available at your convenience.

The *IDC Quarterly* and the annual *IDC Survey of Law* are integral to our brand and our mission. I can tell you from personal experience that judges keep these publications on their desk in their chambers and they have complimented me on the quality of the articles. The credit belongs to our editorial board, columnists and authors.

Five years ago, in his final President's Message (Vol.23, No.2), Howard Jump noted the dramatically changing environment of continuing legal education, and the need for us to offer new and better ways to deliver content to our members. Five years later, I want you to know that our officers are mindful of Howard's words and the economics of offering continuing legal education, and that we will do our best to adapt our programs to keep you apprised of developments in your practice.

### Advocacy

Advocacy will always be part of our mission and of particular interest to me as a past chair of the Amicus Committee. In the last year, the Amicus Committee has continued to file briefs to give the Illinois Supreme Court the defense perspective on issues important in your practice and to help shape the development of the law in Illinois. Our legislative committee has weighed in on bills pending in the General Assembly and updated you on our efforts during the legislative session through YouTube videos. However, as Mark Mifflin observed last year in his final President's Message (Vol.27, No.2), there is still no end in sight to the partisan standoff in Springfield, and we can expect more of the same in 2018, an election year. Because we are now more visible in Springfield due to Mark's leadership and the efforts of the



Legislative Committee, I encourage you to contribute to our PAC, which enables us to work with our legislators to improve our civil justice system. Please consider a PAC contribution when renewing your membership.

As I previously reported (Vol.27, No.4), the IDC, along with DRI and many other organizations, advocated against the American Law Institute's (ALI) draft Restatement of the Law: Liability Insurance in 2017. The final vote, which was scheduled for May 2017, has been delayed. We will update you on the result of the vote, which ALI has rescheduled for May 2018.

Finally, the proposed amendments to Supreme Court Rules 202-212, Proposal 17-12, which came out of the Illinois Supreme Court's Civil Justice Committee, challenged us this year. That proposal, if approved by the Illinois Supreme Court, would have eliminated discovery depositions in Illinois. The IDC was one of a number of organizations that filed written submissions opposing the proposed amendments and we designated Pat Eckler to speak at the public hearing before the Illinois Supreme Court Rules Committee. After we filed our position statement opposing the proposal and met with the chair of the Civil Justice Committee, the sponsor withdrew the proposal. At the time of publication of this column, I cannot predict whether any future proposal will take into account our concerns and suggestions for improvement. Nevertheless, regardless of what happens in the future, I want you to know that we made our case and will work with other groups to protect and improve our civil justice system. Our position statement was the work of many volunteers and you can find our statement on the withdrawn proposal on our website.

## Membership

It is no secret that due to a generational shift and law firm economics, membership in many professional organizations has declined over time. The IDC is no exception. Because our young attorneys are the future, we have addressed the challenge by reaching out to them with a committee and programs geared to their needs. We have also ramped up our membership recruitment efforts with our member-get-a-member program, which added 66 members during 2017, its first year of implementation. Although membership will continue to be a challenge, we are mindful of the changing demographics and will continue to work with young lawyers to provide opportunities for their professional development and to provide value to member defense firms.

## Final Thoughts

It is not possible to recognize and thank by name all of the many members who volunteer and contribute to the IDC. The activities and events I have highlighted represent only a sample of the work done in the past year. It has been an honor to work with my fellow officers, directors and members who are dedicated to the IDC and its mission.

I joined the IDC more than 30 years ago when I was a first-year associate. Over time, the IDC gave me the opportunity to write for and speak at the Spring Seminar, volunteer for and chair the amicus committee, and serve in leadership of the IDC. I am grateful to the IDC and proud of what the IDC has to offer its members. Other state defense organizations have approached us for our ideas, most recently following a speech I gave at the DRI Annual Meeting in October 2017, when I told an audience made up of members of DRI and state level defense organizations what the IDC has to offer. But we cannot afford to be complacent; we have more to do to compete in a changing marketplace, and our success ultimately depends on you. As my term ends, I know that the IDC is in capable hands with President-Elect Brad Nahrstadt and the other officers and directors who will lead us in the future.



## About the IDC

The Illinois Association Defense Trial Counsel (IDC) is the premier association of attorneys in Illinois who devote a substantial portion their practice to the representation of business, corporate, insurance, professional and other individual defendants in civil litigation. For more information on the IDC, visit us on the web at [www.iadtc.org](http://www.iadtc.org) or contact us at PO Box 588, Rochester, IL 62563-0588, 217-498-2649, 800-232-0169, [idc@iadtc.org](mailto:idc@iadtc.org).