

To my Colleagues in the Law Student Division:

My name is Michaela Posner and I am a current 1L at the University of California, Irvine School of Law, hoping to have the honor of holding the position of Law Student At-Large on the ABA Board of Governors. I am a second-generation law student, and had the privilege of growing up around the ABA, having traveled with the Section of Labor and Employment Law and its Ethics Committee since 1997. Because I came straight from my undergraduate studies, I am a younger student and believe this gives me a unique perspective on the role that young attorneys and law students can play to advance the legal profession.

There are several issues that I believe the ABA should address in order to support a system of legal education that prepares law students for practice, and also increases access to justice for low-income individuals in the United States. First, the ABA should encourage clinical education under the supervision of professors or attorneys. The benefit to this is two-fold; students gain guided hands-on experience in client interaction and representation, and low-income individuals have increased access to legal representation. When students are given the opportunity to gain hands-on experience in a potential field of practice, they get a better sense of whether they want to work in that field, and also gain practical experience representing clients. In order for this effort to be properly overseen by attorneys, the ABA should encourage attorneys to include law students in their pro bono activities.

Another problem facing current students and graduates is student debt. Law school is extremely expensive, and very few individuals are able to graduate without debt. For those with debt, it can take over a decade to pay off interest accrued on the loans. Many students who enter law school intending to go into public interest end up taking jobs outside of their preferred field of practice, but have a higher salary so that they can pay off their debt. There is a lack of loan forgiveness opportunities, which makes law school prohibitively expensive and difficult to access for individuals who come from a low-income background. The legal profession can best serve American society when the profession mirrors the country, and attorneys are in tune with the struggles Americans are faced with. While there is no denying the necessity of a legal education to practice law, such an opportunity should not be closed off to groups who historically have been underrepresented in the profession, or come from low-income backgrounds. While it is difficult to control the cost of a legal education, it is ridiculous that individuals have to spend a decade paying back loans they took out to attend law school.

Furthermore, the #MeToo movement has led to an awakening about the inappropriate, unprofessional, and unacceptable ways women have been treated in the workplace. The legal profession has not been exempted from the release of dark stories detailing how female legal professionals have been treated. Of course, the ABA has the Model Rules of Professional Conduct, but there needs to be a stronger signal from the ABA that not only is this kind of behavior unacceptable, but that nobody – regardless of race, gender, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, or even appearance – should be subject to harassment or discrimination as a term or condition of their employment, least of all in the legal profession. In August 2018, the House of Delegates passed Resolution 300, supporting the position that sexual harassment claims should not be mandatorily subjected to arbitration. I strongly support resolution 107B, which is coming before the House of Delegates at its Mid-Winter Meeting. 107B expands on Resolution 300 to also protect against harassment, discrimination and/or retaliation on the basis of race, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, or status as a victim of domestic or sexual violence, in addition to sexual harassment (which was protected in Resolution 300). While sexual harassment is currently being highlighted and certainly has no place in the workplace, there are other forms of discrimination

and harassment that similarly should not be tolerated by the profession, and claims relating to such actions should not be forced to arbitration as the sole method for resolving these actions.

It would be an immense honor to be able to represent the thousands of law students in our country. I look forward to the opportunity to bring a young and optimistic voice to the ABA Board of Governors and House of Delegates.

Michaela Posner

## Michaela Posner

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### EDUCATION

**University of California, Irvine School of Law**, Irvine, CA

Juris Doctor Expected May 2021

**Cornell University**, Ithaca, NY

Bachelor of Science in Industrial and Labor Relations (ILR), May 2018

Minors in International Relations and Spanish

Honors: Dean's List (all semesters, excluding study abroad), Meinig Family Cornell National Scholar, Completed Independent Study on worker misclassification in the "gig economy"

Activities: The Ivy Council, *Executive Board Member*, *Vice President of Internal Affairs*, *United Nations Delegate*  
University Hearing and Review Board, *Neutral Adjudicator*  
Scheinman Center for Conflict Resolution, *Trained Student Mediator*

Study Abroad: Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, Getafe, Madrid, Spain

### LEGAL EXPERIENCE

**Worker's Rights Clinic**, Santa Ana, CA

September 2018 – January 2019

*Clinic Counselor*

Conducted client intake interviews. Researched on client rights and potential actionable issues under the law. Counseled with attorney before giving advice to clinic clients.

**Public Law Center Citizenship Fair**, Anaheim, CA

September 2018

*Pro Bono Volunteer*

Assisted in citizenship eligibility assessments and guided qualifying applicant through N-400 form.

**Law Offices of Michael Posner**, Camarillo, CA

July 2015 - Present

*Legal Assistant*

Accompanied attorney to hearings. Conducted legal research on labor and employment law. Wrote post-hearing brief for attorney review on sexual harassment case. Prepared PERB unfair labor practice charge for filing.

**Los Angeles City Attorney's Office**, Los Angeles, CA

May 2017 - August 2017

*Litigation Support Intern*

Assigned to the Civil Liability Litigation Unit. Prepared evidence for trial in evidence books and trial presentation software. Assisted attorneys with witness preparation by acting as opposing counsel or a mock juror. Joined the litigation team at trial, ran the presentation software, and followed witness testimony with deposition transcripts for possible impeachment. Conducted legal research on procedural rules for Federal Court cases.

**National Labor Relations Board (Region 21)**, Los Angeles, CA

June 2016 - August 2016

*Student Volunteer Field Examiner Intern*

Investigated Unfair Labor Practice charges. Conducted union representation elections. Took affidavits in English and Spanish from involved parties. Performed legal research on the charges. Wrote up investigation summary and recommendation for the Regional Director. Represented Region 21 at the Orange County Labor Employment Relations Association Annual Conference.

### EMPLOYMENT

**Cornell ILR School Office of Undergraduate Admissions**, Ithaca, NY

September 2014 - May 2018

*ILR Ambassador*

Led information sessions for prospective students and their families. Greeted visitors, answered phone calls and emails from applicants and their parents. Helped run on-campus events for applicants in fall and admitted students in the spring.

### SKILLS AND INTERESTS

Fluent in Spanish. I enjoy traveling and taking pictures of places I visit, whether it's another country or an afternoon at the beach. I also like to cook and bring home flavors of places I visited, and my paella is now a family favorite.