



TBBBA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By: Noel Boeke, Esquire

When I initially wrote this message over a month ago, we thought Remote Reality was thankfully coming to an end. Such an extraordinary time we have lived in over the last 18 months! These months in the Remote Reality have been so out of the ordinary, so strange, and so very uncommon. Uncommon times that call for uncommon fortitude, invention, and thinking. A big salute to Kathleen DiSanto and all the TBBBA board members, speakers, and other volunteers who kept the TBBBA humming along with Zoom events. And thank goodness we were able to start this summer off with an in-person happy hour at Ulele hosted by Anthony & Partners and then host the annual Past Presidents' reception at the Columbia. Unfortunately, in light of the rapid spread of the COVID-19 Delta variant, we have again postponed the already postponed Annual Dinner scheduled for August 26th. Stand by for word about future live or remote events.

These uncommon times, naturally, got me thinking about our own uncommon calling, or rather, our calling to be uncommon. I would argue that none of us is called to be average. The center of the bell curve is not our destiny. Not at all. We members of the bankruptcy bar are meant to be extraordinary, to be the outliers, to be the uncommon – though perhaps not in the most popularly coveted, or even obvious ways. It would be nice if we had a 95-mph fastball or if we were awarded Michelin stars for our cooking. That is probably not in the cards for us, but we can be uncommon in other more important ways.

- We can be uncommonly kind. When that project comes back and it still needs a lot of work, when there are delays, or when our teammates miss the mark, we can show the utmost kindness – taking time to teach, to mentor, to understand, and to help others become better.

- We can be uncommonly gracious. We can be the person who welcomes the stranger, puts the visitor at ease, and who is always there to include the outsider, to comfort the sorrowful, and to visit with the lonely. We can make charity and compassion our most important business.
- We can be uncommonly faithful. We can do what is right when no one is watching, even if it sets us back, or if others think less of us because of it. We can do good acts solely for the benefit of the other and without consideration of personal gain or recognition. We can be the kind of friend that we would want to have.
- We can be uncommonly peaceful and professional. We can work to foster cooperation and to resolve conflict. We can embrace the fact that our lives of zealous and effective advocacy need not require acrimony. We can be the person that others turn to when a fight is brewing. We can be the peacemakers.
- We can be uncommonly positive. When others are down, when it is easy to complain, when the groupthink is trending negative, we can be the voice of hope. We can always argue for optimism, look to the bright side, and promote good spirits – leading by example and blazing the trail towards better days.

The opportunities for the types of exceptionalism that really matter are endless. You already know this, of course, because I witness countless examples of these uncommon virtues every day. Let us all continue to nurture the extraordinary capacity for good in each of us through the end of this year, into the next, and on towards our future. And here is wishing each of you and yours uncommon happiness, joy, and blessings!

Reprinted with permission from The Cramdown, Newsletter of the Tampa Bay Bankruptcy Bar Association, Summer 2021 Edition.