

A Profound Thank You

This is my final column and is written with deep appreciation for the incredible opportunity you have given to me over the last 14 years, eight as your executive director.

BY LARRY J. MARTIN

It has been my privilege to be a part of the State Bar of Wisconsin's mission of serving our members, the court, and the public. More importantly, it has been my pleasure to be a part of a legal community of lawyers, justices, judges, and colleagues who tirelessly work every day to ensure access to justice and the preservation of the rule of law. It is a community of which I am proud to count myself a part.

Together, we have accomplished much and moved the organization forward. The State Bar is financially strong and is a respected voice among policymakers in our advocacy for improving the quality of legal services and the regulation of the legal profession. We have developed a close partnership with our justices, judges, and court system, and our commitment to providing high-quality educational programming and products to our members is unrivaled.

We brought back the Annual Meeting & Conference (AMC) and invested in our fall Solo-Small Firm Conference, which is second to none. In addition, through our leadership development efforts, we are identifying, training, and mentoring the next generation of leaders in the legal profession and our communities. Thanks to the support of many, the Wisconsin Law Foundation has seen exponential growth, and this next year will extend four times the amount in grants given just 13 years ago.

Our ethics, Practice 411, and WisLAP programs, as well as support for our sections, have expanded, as we continue to make our members' practice, our purpose. In addition, I would put up our award-winning *Wisconsin Lawyer* magazine against any other bar publication as the best in the country.

Finally, the State Bar continues its commitment to creating a culture of belonging and opportunity for everyone through various programs and initiatives, such as our Diversity Clerkship Program.

Thanks to the collective work of our members, elected and volunteer leaders, and staff, the State Bar of Wisconsin has a well-earned reputation as one of the most innovative and service-focused state bars in the country.

The State Bar of Wisconsin's future is bright. I look forward to watching the next generation of lawyers – my son Samuel included – enter the legal profession. I know that they will make a difference in their communities, just as generations before them have done.

The time has simply come for me to step aside and pursue the next chapter of my life. I am profoundly grateful for the many experiences, friendships, and accomplishments that together we have had. I love the people I work for and work with. For this I thank you. **WL**



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Samuel Martin (left) celebrates becoming a Wisconsin lawyer in May with his dad, Larry Martin, State Bar of Wisconsin executive director.