



Press Release

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Thomas V. Bender Becomes KCMBA's New President

On December 11, 2009, Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association (KCMBA) held its 125th Annual Meeting and Luncheon. Close to a thousand attendees witnessed the passing of the President's Gavel from Rebbecca Lake Wood to Thomas V. Bender—the 2010 KCMBA President.

Tom Bender received a Bachelor of Science in Accounting from the University of Missouri - Columbia in 1975 and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Missouri - Columbia School of Law in 1979. He has been a trial lawyer for more than 30 years. He was a partner with the law firm of Linde Thomson Langworthy Kohn & Van Dyke, P.C. until 1991, practicing in both the firm's Missouri and Texas offices, before becoming a founding member of the law firm of Walters Bender Strohhahn & Vaughan, P.C. in 1991. Bender's firm is based in Kansas City and has a national reputation for representing individual and corporate clients in nearly every type of civil litigation—including complex and class action litigation, business and commercial litigation, predatory lending and consumer protection litigation, insurance law and securities litigation, and patent and copyright litigation. Bender and his firm have most recently been engaged in a variety of class action lawsuits representing plaintiff-class members across the country, including second mortgage borrowers, purchasers of "hot fuel," and purchasers of products containing BPA. His firm also has defended several companies involved in class actions.

Bender has served on numerous KCMBA committees including co-chair of the Civil Procedures and CLE Committees, as well as on various standing and ad hoc committees such as the Strategic Vision Committee and the Homelessness Committee. He has also worked on Bar Foundation projects as legal counsel and as a member of the KCMBF Liberty & Justice Gala Committee, and regularly participates in the Voluntary Attorney Project. As a result of his

efforts, Bender has received recognition for his service to the legal community, including the KCMBA's President's Award in 1999 and the KCMBF's President's Award in 2005.

The Bench-Bar & Boardroom Conference is really how Bender first got involved with KCMBA. Eventually, he was asked by a KCMBA officer to serve on and assist with the KCMBA Nominating, Civil Procedure, and CLE Committees. "I quickly learned how much the KCMBA does for the legal community and that all this work goes unnoticed by most," said Bender. "The KCMBA is truly an amazing organization. The amount of work it quietly gets done and the good it does for attorneys and the metropolitan area is impressive."

Becoming the 2010 President of KCMBA is exciting for Bender—he compares it to taking on a big case. He knows it's a big commitment and that there will be a lot of work involved, but he also knows that he'll have fun working with others toward a common goal—facing and overcoming challenges and obstacles, meeting new people and, this year, seeing a new bar headquarters come together. "We have our hands full in meeting the ambitious but worthy goals that currently exist," Bender said. "The KCMBA's commitment to keep the non-partisan court plan in Missouri from being replaced again is on the front burner as new legislative attacks are planned. The Homelessness and Pro Bono projects begun by Charley German and Rebecca Wood are keeping with the best aims of any bar association. We are moving to a new headquarters with facilities that will finally allow for the type of state-of-the-art CLE and training that we want to offer. We are trying to do all this in the face of a huge monetary crisis that is already economically straining our members. Now that I think about it, I think my first goal is to become the Immediate Past President as soon as possible!"

Photo available upon request.

The Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association serves approximately 5,000 members in the nine-county Kansas City metro area: Johnson and Wyandotte counties in Kansas and Cass, Clay, Jackson, Johnson, Lafayette, Platte and Ray counties in Missouri. The mission of this Association is to serve our members and our community by promoting justice, professional excellence and respect for the law.