



California Association of Workplace Investigators, Inc.

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CAOWInews

December 15, 2009

Ethics Committee, 2010 Program Top Board Agenda

Forming an Ethics Committee and planning the 2010 program topped the agenda of the meeting of the Board of Directors of California Association of Workplace Investigators, Inc. (CAOWI) on December 7 in Oakland. CAOWI's new Ethics Committee is chaired by Walter Cochran-Bond of Pasadena and co-chaired by Lindsay Harris of Berkeley. Plans are progressing for best practices roundtables in March in Oakland, Sacramento, and Los Angeles, a seminar on "Mastering the Art of Employment Investigations" co-sponsored by the Labor and Employment Section of the State Bar of California in June in Los Angeles, and CAOWI's first annual conference in November in the San Francisco Bay Area. The details are below, but first here's a message from our President.

DECEMBER HIGHLIGHTS
BOARD MEETING HELD 12/7 IN OAKLAND
CALL FOR CONFERENCE SPEAKERS AND TOPICS
BAY AREA CHOSEN FOR NOVEMBER CONFERENCE
BEST PRACTICES ROUNDTABLES IN MARCH
CAOWI QUARTERLY SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Amy Oppenheimer

The growth of CAOWI and the number of things already in the works to benefit our members are truly astonishing. We began soliciting members just two and a half months ago, and already 75 of our fellow professionals have joined. We are planning a conference, a day-long investigators training, best practices roundtables, and our first quarterly publication. Committees have met to address legislation relating to workplace investigators and are exploring establishing a professional certification process for workplace investigators. We have an ambitious agenda and talented investigators ready to take on the challenge.

I knew that we would flourish when people began to join who were new to me and to others on the Board. As we had believed, there is an enormous number of experienced workplace investigators in California, most of whom don't know each other and many of whom have been looking for a way to confer with colleagues. I have spoken to most of our members and heard echoed the passion I have for an organization dedicated to addressing the needs of professional workplace investigators. CAOWI intends to become the place where we can discuss our work, improve our skills, and just talk to each other about what we do.

I have already benefited from my membership in our new organization. A few weeks ago I was retained in an investigation involving a police officer. It had been a while since I did one of these and I did not have a current notice that complied with the Public Safety Officers Procedural Bill of Rights Act. Although CAOWI does not yet have a listserv up and running (we will soon!), I sent an e-mail to the Board members and very quickly received two such forms from my CAOWI colleagues.

Soon we will be forming groups of CAOWI members in the same geographical area who are interested in meeting to discuss questions and issues that come up in our work into "circles of colleagues". The details will be announced in January, and the first meetings will take place in February. I hope all of you will become enthusiastic participants in the activities planned for 2010 and that you will share your ideas, practices, perspectives and answers with your CAOWI colleagues.

BEST PRACTICES COMMITTEE SETS THE PACE

By Cynthia Remmers, Chair

The Best Practices Committee is off and running strong! By design, our committee members are experienced professional investigators with diverse backgrounds, perspectives and geographical bases. Our members hail from San Diego, Los Angeles, Fresno, Sacramento, and the greater SF Bay Area. They include some of the most experienced workplace investigators/experts in the state, including independent employment attorney investigators who have represented both plaintiffs and defendants, independent licensed private investigators and HR investigators, an in-house investigator/manager, an independent workplace violence investigator/expert, a chief internal auditor/investigator, and an attorney investigator/digital forensics expert.

As a committee we have already discovered the richness and value of exploring investigation best practices with a group of dedicated professionals who share the same profession but who bring different career paths, experiences and interests to the discussion. We are interested in including all CAOWI members in this vital dialogue, so we will have three best practices roundtables for members only. The committee will meet again on January 21st to create the data-gathering framework for the roundtables and asks that you share any ideas you may have to help us in this task. Members with questions about any of the roundtables should contact any of the regional roundtable chairs for further information: Vida Thomas (Sacramento); Jody Shipper and Cathy Balin (Los Angeles); and Bobbi Lambert and Cynthia Remmers (Oakland).

We hope to see all CAOWI members at one (or more) of these event so reserve the date now!

The roundtable sessions are scheduled for 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the following locations:

March 4: One Kaiser Plaza, 2nd Floor Conference Center, OAKLAND

March 5: Weintraub Genshlea Chediak, 400 Capitol Mall, SACRAMENTO

March 9: USC Credit Union Bldg., 2nd Floor, 3720 S. Flower St., LOS ANGELES

A \$25 fee will be charged to attend the roundtable, which will cover lunch and some of the expenses. The roundtables are open to CAOWI members only. Advance registration on the CAOWI website will be required. The registration form will be available on the website in late January or early February. We will not be offering MCLE credit for member attorneys because the goal of these sessions is fact-gathering and analysis, not information dissemination.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- January, 2010, first issue of *CAOWI Quarterly*. Plans are on track for the launch in January of the organization's professional journal, which will be free to CAOWI members. Members are encouraged to contribute an article at publications@caowi.org as soon as possible since the first issue is already full and later issues are now taking shape.
- February, 2010, first meetings of CAOWI local circles of colleagues. Details will be announced in January.
- March 4, 5, & 8, 2010, best practices roundtables in Oakland, Sacramento, and Los Angeles.
- April 1, 2010, last day to join CAOWI as a Lifetime Sustaining Member for \$3,000.
- April 1, 2010, deadline for submitting speaker proposals for November Annual Conference.
- June 1, 2010, education seminar on "Mastering the Art of Employment Investigations" at the State Bar office in Los Angeles, co-sponsored with the State Bar Labor and Employment Section. Open to CAOWI members and non-members. Registration and MCLE credit for attorneys will be handled by the State Bar.
- November 4, 5, and 6, 2010, CAOWI's First Annual Conference in the San Francisco Bay Area. The Education Committee has narrowed down the location to either Oakland or San Jose. The committee welcomes suggestions for conference topics which may be e-mailed to education@caowi.org.

REQUEST FOR SPEAKER PROPOSALS FOR THE 2010 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Education Committee, chaired by Sue Ann Van Dermeyden of Sacramento, is soliciting speakers for CAOWI's annual conference in November. You can download and complete your proposal form, including your proposed topic and biographical information, at www.caowi.org. Deadline for submissions is April 1, 2010.

NEW ETHICS COMMITTEE FORMED; 3 COMMITTEES EXPANDED

After hearing a presentation from member Lindsay Harris of Berkeley, the CAOWI Board of Directors at its meeting on December 7 in Oakland decided to form an Ethics Committee. Lindsay outlined for the Board the ethical issues she faced when she recently started her practice as an attorney-investigator, and how she resolved those issues for herself. The Board felt that it would be beneficial to CAOWI members, and to the profession in general, to have a committee which would address the ethical issues faced by workplace investigators in the various professions that comprise CAOWI. The new committee is chaired by Director Walter Cochran-Bond of Pasadena, co-chaired by Lindsay Harris, and will consist of a total of 12 CAOWI members. Walt has lots of ideas for the work of the committee, including providing ethical guidance to members.

The Board also expanded the CAOWI Certification, Legislation, and Publications committees from a maximum of 8 to a maximum of 12 members each to provide more opportunities for member involvement, and more people to share the workload of those committees. All CAOWI committees now have a maximum of 12 members. The Board disbanded the Communications Committee, delegating the responsibility of maintaining communications with CAOWI members and the public to CAOWI's President, Amy Oppenheimer, with the assistance of CAOWI's Executive Director, Steve Angelides.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY

I am looking for a few highly qualified licensed private investigators to represent Norman A. Traub Associates in Central and Northern California. The investigators working with us are all independent contractors who possess the following qualities: excellent investigators, excellent report writers, highly ethical, great interpersonal skills. Our Associates in Southern California are either retired police executives or attorneys engaged in fact finding. The fee schedule for investigators is \$100 per hour plus expenses. Replies to: Norman A. Traub Associates, 5409 Via Fonte, Yorba Linda, CA 92886 (714) 693-3428 fax (714) 200-0310
www.normtraubassociates.com.

EASIER THAN EVER TO JOIN CAOWI

Membership in CAOWI is open to anyone who is dedicated to promoting and enhancing workplace investigations in California. We are now able to accept credit card and electronic check payments by fax. To become a member, go to [Join Us](#).

An annual membership is valid for one year from the date of application. The first 100 members who join will be listed as Charter Members in CAOWI's online membership directory. Annual membership dues are \$150. Annual dues for sustaining membership, which includes prominent placement on CAOWI's website and in CAOWI's advertising, and a 50% discount on all CAOWI activities, are \$1000. Until April 1, 2010, lifetime sustaining memberships will be available for \$3,000.

More information about CAOWI, including an introductory video, photographs and biographies of Board Members, a list of Charter Members, and links to Sustaining Members, is available at www.caowi.org.

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