PBA Leadership for 2015-16 Takes Office May 8 in Philadelphia

William H. Pugh V, President
William H. Pugh V of Erdenheim, Montgomery County, managing partner of the law firm of Kane, Pugh, Knoell, Troy & Kramer LLP in Norristown and Philadelphia, will become the 121st president of the PBA at the conclusion of the PBA Annual Meeting in Philadelphia.

Pugh is a former Zone 9 governor on the PBA Board of Governors representing Bucks, Chester, Delaware and Montgomery County lawyers. He served as co-chair of the PBA Diversity Task Force. Pugh is a member of the PBA Planning Committee, the PBA House of Delegates and the PBA Civil Litigation Section. He is a life fellow of the Pennsylvania Bar Foundation (PBF) and a member of the Keystone Society.

Pugh is a former president of the Montgomery Bar Association (MBA), where he chaired the CLE, Judiciary, Program and Events and Montgomery County Law Reporter committees. He was the editor of the Montgomery County Law Reporter from 1992 to 1994. He also served as president of the MBA Political Action Committee. In 2007, Pugh was the president of the Montgomery Bar Foundation (MBF), of which he is a life fellow and a member of the Stefan and Taxis circles.

Pugh is a fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers and a fellow of the Litigation Counsel of America. He was named “Trial Lawyer of the Year” in 2007 by the Montgomery County Trial Lawyers Association (MCTLA), of which he served as president in 1999. He is also a member of the Pennsylvania Defense Institute, the Defense Research Institute and the American Board of Trial Advocates. He has been named a “Pennsylvania Super Lawyer” from 2005 through 2015.

Pugh is a member of the board of directors of the Montgomery Child Advocacy Project. He is on the pastoral council of St. Genevieve Parish, where he served as president of the Catholic Youth Organization from 1999 to 2006. He is a member of the President’s Council and the Purple and Gold Club of Mount Saint Joseph Academy and is a member of the development advisory board of the Sisters of Saint Joseph.

Pugh is a graduate of the University of Richmond and Villanova University School of Law.

Sara A. Austin, President-elect
York County lawyer Sara A. Austin, a partner in the Austin Law Firm LLC, will become PBA president-elect.

Austin served on the PBA Board of Governors from 2009 to 2012 as the Zone 3 governor for Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Juniata, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry and York counties. She is a past president of the Pennsylvania Bar Institute (PBI).

Austin is a former president of the Middle District Bankruptcy Bar Association and a member of the American Bankruptcy Institute. She is an adjunct professor at the Widener University School of Law in Harrisburg.

She has served on the board of directors of the Community First Fund. She is former president of and current solicitor for the York Spanish American Center. She has also served on the board of directors of the York Symphony Orchestra, and she is a former president of Leadership York.

Austin is a graduate of the University of Virginia and the Marshall-Wythe School of Law at The College of William & Mary.

continued on Page 14
Sharon R. López, Vice President
Sharon R. López, a partner in Lancaster’s Triqueta Law and special counsel to the chief counsel of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission, will become vice president of the PBA.

López is the co-chair of the PBA Membership Development Committee. She is a past co-chair of the PBA Civil and Equal Rights Committee. A member of PBA’s GLBT Rights and Minority Bar committees and the PBA WIP, López served as the first editor of Open Court, the GLBT Rights Committee’s electronic newsletter. She also serves on the PBA Diversity Team, PBA Federal Practice Committee and PBA Judicial Evaluation Commission. She is a member of the PBA Civil Litigation, Labor and Employment Law and Solo and Small Firm Practice sections.

López served as president of the PBA Conference of County Bar Leaders (CCBL) in 2013-14. In 2007, she was elected as the first minority representative to the CCBL Executive Committee. She is a PBF life fellow.

López is a member of the Lancaster Bar Association (LBA) and served as chair of the LBA Diversity Committee. She is a member of the LBA Employment Law Section and an elected member of the LBA Judiciary Committee.

She has served on the boards of directors of Family Service, Community Hospital of Lancaster, and the YWCA of Lancaster, serving as chair of its Racial Justice Committee. She is a founding board member of the Lancaster AIDS Project.

López holds an undergraduate degree from Eastern Mennonite College and a juris doctorate degree from Widener University School of Law, which honored her in 2014 for her efforts to promote diversity in the legal profession. She received the Widener University School of Law Alumni Outstanding Service Award in 2008. She was named a “Pennsylvania Super Lawyer” for 2013 and 2014.

Francis X. O’Connor, Immediate Past President
A sole practitioner in Great Bend, Susquehanna County, Francis X. O’Connor will become PBA immediate past president.

O’Connor served as PBA treasurer from 2008 to 2011 and as the Zone 5 governor representing lawyers in Bradford, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Pike, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Wayne and Wyoming counties from 2003 to 2007.

A member and past chair of the PBA Membership Development Committee, O’Connor is also a past president of the CCBL and is the recipient of the CCBL’s Gilbert Nurick Award. He is a council member of the PBA Solo and Small Firm Practice Section. He also serves as a lecturer for the PBI. He is the immediate past vice president and treasurer of the Susquehanna County Bar Association. He has served as chair of the Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, of which he was a member for six years. He has spoken to numerous groups on lawyer discipline and legal ethics and has authored a number of related articles.

O’Connor serves as solicitor for and is a life member of the Great Bend Fire Company. He is an Eagle Scout and is an assistant scoutmaster for Troop 89 of the Boy Scouts of America. He has received numerous awards for his scouting activities, including the Silver Beaver Award and the District Award of Merit. He is a Eucharistic minister at St. Lawrence Roman Catholic Church and a fourth-degree member of the Knights of Columbus. He also serves as a member/attendant for the Great Bend/Hallstead Volunteer Ambulance Company.

O’Connor is a graduate of the University of Scranton and St. Louis University School of Law. He served from 2006 to 2013 on the University of Scranton Alumni Association Board of Governors.

Donald J. Martin, Chair, House of Delegates
Donald J. Martin, a sole practitioner in Norristown, will begin a two-year term as chair of the PBA House of Delegates.

A member of the PBA House of Delegates since 2001, Martin is a member of the PBA Solo and Small Firm Practice Section, of which he served as chair from 2002 to 2004. He is chair of the PBA Bylaws Committee, immediate past chair of the PBA Senior Lawyers Committee and a member of the PBA GLBT Rights Committee. He has served on the PBA Nominating and Planning committees and the PBA Lawyer Advertising and Health Care Law task forces. He is a life fellow of the PBF and is a frequent lecturer and course organizer for the PBI.

Martin is active in the MBA, serving as its president in 2012 and on its board of directors. He also chaired the MBA Lawyer Referral/Legal Access Committee and served on the editorial board of the Montgomery County Law Reporter. He was a director, officer and trustee of the MBF. He is also a member of the MCTA and the ABA.

Martin is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Chicago Law School. He has served the Montgomery County Court of Common Pleas as its law clerk for asbestos litigation since 1981, as law clerk to all Montgomery County senior judges since 1998 and has continued those duties and assumed others as an appointed judicial officer for complex litigation beginning in 2002.

Anne N. John, Secretary
Anne N. John of Mount Lebanon, a private practitioner with the law firm of John & John in Uniontown, Fayette County, will begin a third one-year term as PBA secretary.

John served as the Zone 6 governor on the PBA Board of Governors from 2009 to 2012, representing Fayette, Greene, Washington and Westmoreland County lawyers.

John is co-chair of the PBA Shale Energy Law Committee, vice chair of the PBA Review and Certifying Board and chair of the PBA House of Delegates Draft Committee. She is an executive-council member of the PBA WIP. A member of the PBA Diversity Team since its inception, she has also served on the PBA Diversity Task Force and chaired the PBA Leadership Recruitment and Development Committee. John is currently president-elect of the Fayette County Bar Association, for which she served as secretary from 2006 to 2013.

Active in the community, John is a member of the board of directors of Advantage Credit Counseling Services Inc. and a former member of the board of directors of the Better Business Bureau of Western Pennsylvania Inc. She currently serves on continued on Page 15
the board of the Mt. Lebanon Aqua Club.

John is a graduate of Dickinson College and Penn State Dickinson School of Law.

David E. Schwager, Treasurer

Luzerne County lawyer David E. Schwager, a partner in the Wilkes-Barre law firm of Chariton, Schwager & Malak, will begin a second one-year term as PBA treasurer.

Schwager served from 2010 to 2013 as Zone 5 governor on the PBA Board of Governors for Bradford, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Pike, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Wayne and Wyoming counties. He serves as vice chair of the PBA Bylaws Committee. He is a past chair of the PBA Real Property, Probate and Trust Law Section and a past chair of its Financing of Real Estate and Real Estate Taxation committees. A member of the PBA House of Delegates, Schwager previously served as chair of the PBA Statutory Law Committee. He is a member of the boards of directors of the PBI and the PBF. He is also a PBF life fellow.

Named a “Pennsylvania Super Lawyer” by Philadelphia Magazine every year since 2010, he is a member of the Advisory Committee on Real Property Law of the Joint State Government Commission of the Pennsylvania General Assembly. He recently was reappointed to a second consecutive three-year term on the Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. He is a past vice chair of the Real Property, Probate and Trust Law Committee of theABA YLD. He is the treasurer of the Middle District (Pa.) Bankruptcy Bar Association and a past president of the Luzerne County Bar Association YLD.

A past assistant district attorney for Luzerne County, Schwager is chair of the Kingston Borough Zoning Hearing Board, an assistant Luzerne County solicitor and the solicitor for the Shickshinny Sanitary Sewer Authority. Schwager serves as president of the B’nai B’rith Apartments Housing Foundation, chair of the board of trustees of Temple Israel in Wilkes-Barre and treasurer of Ecumencial Enterprises. He is a past president of the Jewish Community Center of Wyoming Valley, Temple Israel of Wilkes-Barre, the S.J. Strauss Lodge of B’nai B’rith and the Wyoming Seminary Alumni Association. He served as chair of the United Hebrew Institute School Board and the 2007 Jewish Federation campaign.

Schwager is a graduate of Lafayette College and Penn State Dickinson School of Law. He has served on the executive committee of the Lafayette College Alumni Association and on the board of the General Alumni Association of the Penn State Dickinson School of Law.

Justin A. Bayer, YLD Chair

Justin A. Bayer of Worcester Township, Montgomery County, a partner in the Norristown law firm of Kane, Pugh, Knoell, Troy and Kramer LLP, will become the chair of the PBA YLD.

Bayer has served on the PBA YLD Council since 2010. He is a member of the PBA House of Delegates.

Bayer is a past member of the board of directors of the MBA and has served as a member of the MBA Executive Board. He is chair of the MBA Medical-Legal Committee and a past chair of the MBA Young Lawyers’ Section.

Bayer has lectured for the PBI and for a variety of legal education programs for lawyers, law students and professionals. In 2007, 2008, and from 2010 to 2015, both Philadelphia Magazine and Law and Politics selected him as a “Rising Star” attorney.

Bayer is a graduate of Lehigh University and Villanova University School of Law.

Joel C. Seelye, YLD Chair-elect

Joel C. Seelye of Hollidaysburg, Blair County, a partner in the Altoona law firm of Grabill & Seelye PLLC, will become the YLD chair-elect.

Seelye has served as the PBA YLD Zone 8 chair on the PBA YLD Executive Council. He is also the PBA YLD liaison to the PBI board of directors. He serves as the regional coordinator for the PBA YLD Statewide High School Mock Trial Competition. He also is the Blair County coordinator for the PBA YLD “Wills for Heroes” program, which provides free basic estate planning documents to first responders and military veterans in Pennsylvania.

Seelye is a member of the Blair County Bar Association (BCBA) and has served as president of the BCBA Young Lawyers Committee. He is a member of the executive committee of the J.S. Black American Inn of Court. Seelye serves as vice president of the board of directors of the Hollidaysburg YMCA and on the advisory committee for the criminal justice program at the YTI Career Institute. The Altoona Mirror selected him for its “20 under 40” list in 2012, a distinction recognizing business success, entrepreneurial spirit and community involvement. He is a 2014 graduate of Leadership Blair County and serves on the program’s planning committee.

Seelye is a summa cum laude graduate of California University of Pennsylvania and Duquesne University School of Law. He also attended the International Study of Law program in Ireland.

Lars Anderson, YLD Immediate Past Chair

Lars Anderson of Wilkes-Barre, an associate in the Kingston office of Hourigan, Kluger & Quinn PC, will become immediate past chair of the PBA YLD.

Anderson has been active in the PBA YLD since his 2010 appointment as co-chair of PBA YLD Zone 5. In 2011, he served as the PBA YLD at-large zone chair prior to his election as the PBA YLD secretary.

Anderson is vice chair of the PBA Community and Public Relations Committee and serves on the executive council of the PBA Labor and Employment Law Section. He is active in the Lackawanna and Luzerne County Bar associations’ Young Lawyers divisions and has served as the Luzerne County Bar Association YLD treasurer.

Anderson was a member of the Leadership Wilkes-Barre class of 2012-13. He is a member of the Wilkes-Barre Rotary Club and is on the boards of directors of the Wilkes-Barre Area Chamber of Commerce and the Wilkes-Barre YMCA. He also serves on the parish council of the Church of Christ Uniting in Kingston and chairs its personnel committee.

He is a graduate of the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and the New England School of Law.

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