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## SLOCL STUDENTS HELP LAUNCH THE UNITY BAR OF SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

San Luis Obispo College of Law students will join with judges, justices, commissioners, lawyers, and legal professionals to launch a new Unity Bar of San Luis Obispo County on October 5, 2023. According to Associate Justice Hernaldo J. Baltodano from the Second District Court of Appeal, the Unity Bar of San Luis Obispo County is about “inclusivity, serving others, and positively impacting our legal profession, judiciary, and access to justice.”

In partnership with the Women Lawyers Association of San Luis Obispo County, the Unity Bar of San Luis Obispo County is modeled after the Sacramento Unity Bar, which formed 36 years ago when the leaders of various affinity bar associations, including Law Raza Lawyers, the Asian Bar Association of Sacramento, and the Wiley Manuel Bar, formed an alliance to work together, lift up each other,

and collectively nurture and support diverse candidates for judicial appointment. Sacramento Unity Bar also includes bar associations representing South Asians, Filipinos, women, and the LGBTQ+ communities.

The Sacramento Unity Bar has inspired generations of lawyers and judges across California and sister Unity Bars have formed in counties across the state, including in the Inland Empire (San Bernardino and Riverside), Merced, Santa Barbara, Kern, Orange, Yolo, the Central Valley (Fresno), Tulare, and San Diego. One co-founder of the Unity Bar of Sacramento, Luis Céspedes, currently serves as the governor’s judicial appointment secretary. Secretary Céspedes says “now more than ever, the work of the Unity Bar is critical” for educating the public about the importance of our judiciary in an era of significant divisiveness and conflict.

The legal community in San Luis Obispo County is too small and too homogenous to have individual affinity bar associations, but we do have individual judges and lawyers and an active women lawyers association committed to education, mentorship, and diversity. We also have a community-based law school—San Luis Obispo College of Law—which draws upon local attorneys and judges to serve as adjunct faculty and is committed to making law school more accessible and affordable to a diversity of law students. San Luis Obispo is ripe for the creation of a Unity Bar, and I firmly believe law students will be amongst some of the new organization’s greatest proponents and beneficiaries.

The Unity Bar of San Luis Obispo County endeavors to encourage, support, and recommend highly qualified candidates for judicial appointment who reflect the dynamic spirit of the Great

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State of California and its diverse demographics—judicial candidates who possess a unique blend of characteristics, including humility, empathy, intelligence, intellectual curiosity, integrity, civic-mindedness, community involvement, judicial temperament, and a strong work ethic. [See Government Code Section 12011.5.] This requires mentoring and supporting a diverse pipeline of attorneys in our community and beyond. This means law students are central to the work of the Unity Bar of San Luis Obispo County.

In addition to taking part in early strategy sessions to form the Unity Bar of San Luis Obispo County, numerous San Luis Obispo College of Law (SLOCL) students will attend the Inaugural Dinner alongside law school faculty and administration. The SLOCL Student Bar Association is sending two students to help with event logistics. Thanks to the generous sponsorship of local attorneys and law firms and other organizations, including the Diversity Coalition of San Luis Obispo County, Kern County Unity Bar, and San Luis Obispo College of Law, SLOCL students who want to attend the Inaugural Dinner can do so for free.

Interested students and faculty who are unable to attend the October 5 event due to class still have a tremendous opportunity to be a part of history in the making. Sign up to stay informed at <https://slounitybar.com/>.

To highlight the education and mentorship aspects of the Unity Bar and opportunities for collaboration between the Unity Bar and law school, I have been invited to introduce one of the Inaugural Dinner's distinguished speakers, San Luis Obispo County Superior Court Judge Matthew Guerrero who also serves as adjunct faculty at SLOCL. Secretary Céspedes will deliver the keynote address and special guests will include Unity Bar members from across the state.

As campus dean, I am excited to provide San Luis Obispo College of Law students with a unique opportunity to take part in an historic and inspirational event that closely aligns with the mission of our law school—professional excellence, integrity, community service, and access to justice.

More information about the Inaugural Dinner and featured speakers can be found here: <https://slounitybar.com/inaugural-dinner>.

## AND THE MOOT COURT FINALISTS ARE...

Congratulations to the 2023 moot court finalists and their professors.



### Professors:

Joel Franklin  
Sara Cacassa

### Finalists:

Viridiana Dominguez  
Shoshanah McKnight  
Karina Terrazas  
Stacey Wilson



### Professor:

Stephen Wagner

### Finalists:

Charles Cummins  
Stevie Goo  
Louis Jacobson  
Mikayla Regier



### Professors:

Hunter Starr  
Bud Starr

### Finalists:

Mitzy Cuxum  
Emma Doty  
Lizet Gonzalez  
Mike Kwon



### Professors:

Victoria Miranda  
Christine Antonios

### Finalists:

Patricia Adams  
Jaclyn Clements  
Russell Haight  
Anthony Rivera