



Outgoing President's Message to Fellows: State of the College

(excerpts)

Dear Fellow Colleagues:

I hope that this message about the many positive undertakings of the College over the past year will spark some pride in each of you, particularly given the difficult year it has been since last April for most of us. The College's mission is to bring together highly qualified members of the legal profession who, by reason of their character, skill and ability, contribute to the College's goals, achievements and good fellowship. This year has showcased the character, skill and abilities within our Fellowship, and how well we are fulfilling our mission.

College Fellows from the North American continent – from coast to coast, North to South - all had to deal with many troublesome issues this past year to which they had to react. California's far-reaching drought, raging fires and devastating mudslides; recent blizzards and floods in the East and Northeast; disastrous hurricanes and floods in the South, and a multitude of tornadoes and inclement weather across the plains – all plagued the lower fifty and beyond. Our Fellows had to deal with a continuation of devastation in Puerto Rico; the multiple severe earthquakes in Mexico, and the too-hot, too-cold, too-dry and too-wet climate throughout Canada, none of which are historically everyday fare. Yet ACCFL Fellows still found time and energy to support each other during these times of loss, focus on their daily business, and share knowledge with their peers. I am proud to have been your President during such a difficult time.

Sadly, a number of Fellows and close relatives of Fellows of the College died this year, and many Fellows offered each other both special thoughts and support. Such care and reaching out by so many of you further defines us as a unique group of professionals.

The Fellows who passed away are listed on our [In Memoriam page](#) on the website. In the months ahead, we plan to link each name to some biographical information about that person. We will keep you apprised of our work on it.

This past year, the College continued to host Observer Briefing Calls as part of our ongoing College education and development programs. During these hour-long presentations, the College representatives to other organizations provide information on numerous topics, including (but not limited to) updates on laws and regulations, as well as non-ACCFL task force or other activities.

Since last April, we have held eight (8) significant Observer Briefings. The calls are posted in advance on the website, and Fellows are sent advance notice about them so that you can mark your calendars and attend. Links to any materials to be used or shared during the call are emailed prior to the call. [A summary of each call remains on the website](#) for your reference. These calls are increasingly well attended. This is a valuable benefit of your Fellowship in the College. Our incoming President, Penny Christophorou (with help from the Executive Committee) is already planning more briefings for her term in office.

The Observer briefings are not only educational but also provide an avenue for comments by College Fellows and the eventual endorsement or sponsorship by the College of a particular act, such as occurred with respect to the Uniform Commercial Real Estate Receivership Act last year.

Notably, our Board of Regents has also approved, in general, the College co-sponsorship of events with other organizations and College support of actions by other groups in the industry. Other organizations have granted ACCFL Fellows discounts on publications and presentations in the same spirit of cooperation and industry-wide education. Fellows are sent notices about these, so keep an eye on your email.

Our *2017 Fall Dinner & Advanced Seminar* in Chicago in September were both highly successful events. ACCFL Fellow, Professor Neil Cohen, led the Advanced Seminar and kindly provided Fellows (and a few guests) with information for an interactive discussion as follow-up to his presentation at our 2015 Advanced Seminar. More detail can be found on the College website [by clicking here](#).

Our Website Committee, working together with the Executive Committee, has developed a plan for enhancing our relatively new website. Amidst typical glitches in new technology, the website has grown to include information we hope that you find useful.

The future plans include adding more information to the site about what each of you are doing within the industry (see *Fellows in the News*), as you work toward improving and enhancing the practice of commercial finance law and the ethics of the profession.

If you, or a colleague who is a Fellow, are involved in a presentation, have published material – either digitally or in print, are a new member of an industry-based committee, or have been honored in some way, please send us the information. The Website Committee will review and format it for posting on the ACCFL website.

Please Note: there are a few other features of the website we hope will be of interest to you. We have begun to post not only the upcoming events held by the College, but ones of interest to the Fellows that are being held by other organizations or entities. Once on our homepage, click on the *College & Non-college* events bar in the right upper part of the page. This will take you to a calendar that provides some information. If you know of events that you believe are of interest to Fellows, please email us at accfl.admin@dgallc.net. This year you can also send these to either Marshall Grodner or Buzz Guida, co-chairs of the Website Committee.

Similarly, if you know of resources that would be of interest to other College Fellows, please send along that information (with links if applicable), so that we can post it on our *Practice Resources* area of the website. If you have ideas to share that you think might enhance the website, please contact either Marshall or Buzz.

Over the past few years, the College has continued to grow in numbers and stature within the industry. So that we can continue to thrive as a premier organization, we must rely on your involvement. We also believe it is important to protect the synergy resulting from the in-person events that ACCFL offers its Fellows. Additionally, we need to insure that the College remains in a position to offer the Fellows benefits and services that help fulfill the College's mission.

To that end, the Board of Regents approved a dues increase for the current year. The 2018 Fellowship dues are now \$400.00. Dues support the College programs throughout the calendar year, and are paid by those Fellows that not hold Academic, Emeritus or Judicial status as a Fellow.

On the more mundane, but necessary, topic of finances, the Board of Regents has also approved the development of a sponsorship program, in order to continue to maintain and ultimately expand our services and programs without increasing dues beyond reason. Currently, as in the

recent past, we have graciously accepted in-kind sponsorships such as conference space and refreshments offered by law firms of our Executive Committee members or event chairs. We also appreciate the financial support that some of our Fellows or their firms have given to sponsor our events over the last two years.

Sponsorships have enabled ACCFL to continue offering stipends to our Fellows who provide us with updates as representatives of the College on outside committees or industry groups, as well as pay for technology improvements and our administrative management team. The latter, DG&A Management Services, handles the College's day-to-day administration. It processes dues payments and registrations, responds to your inquiries, and manages the website and all the notices sent to you from the College, among other things.

Last, but not least, I look forward to our upcoming **2018 Annual Meeting & Dinner** to be held in Orlando on **April 14**. I am happy to inform you that we will be inducting 11 new Fellows at the Annual Meeting, and honoring Fellow **Professor Frederick Miller** (Fred to many) with the Homer Kripke Achievement Award for his many years of invaluable contributions to the industry. Notices of the Annual Meeting & Dinner are sent to each of you, but you can also find general information on the website (www.accfl.com).

As an aside, but of importance, I also want to inform you that although it appears our website is not "secure", that is in appearances only. For convenience and to keep old links intact, we kept our previous website address when we engaged a new website host and provider. However, the new provider (MemberClicks) offers a secure site to house our website. As you should be aware by now, most notices are sent from accfl@memberclicks-mail.net, a secure program on that server. All payments made through links sent to Fellows in emails are made through another, very secure, third-party payment processor. We are confident that your personal information (beyond what is found in the directory), as well as your financial information, is safely secured.

As I "pass the gavel" to Penny, our incoming President, and as new officers take their new places on the Executive Committee; as we install a new class of Regents and induct new Fellows and honor those who currently constitute the College, I am confident that the College is in good hands. I plan to remain active as your Immediate Past President, and hope that each of you will take time to be an ACTIVE member of this important and collegial organization. I treasure the friendships and camaraderie that I have known in my years with the College and look forward to developing more as I enjoy my position as Past President and continue to work with you in promoting commercial finance law through the American College of Commercial Finance Lawyers!

Best regards,

Sylvia

Sylvia Fung Chin