



Established in 1928, the American Counsel Association is the oldest association of independent law firms in the world.

News from the American Counsel Association

Register now: ACA Mid-Year Meeting

**January 31 to February 6, 2018,
Vancouver, B.C.**

Deadline for reservations:

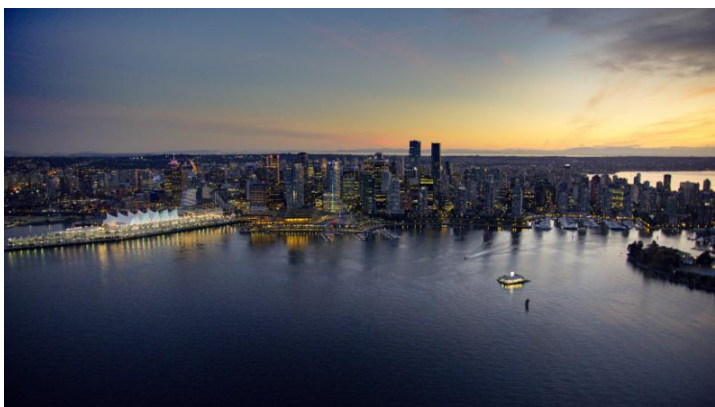
January 26, 2018

For a full itinerary and reservation information, [see our web site](#).

Annual meeting

August 2 to 7, 2018, Chicago

Information on this meeting will be available closer to the meeting date.



Why membership matters: A true story



**Buzz English,
ACA President**

About 4 p.m. on the Friday before Labor Day weekend, I received a panicked call from a frightened client about a serious criminal matter. The client needed an attorney in North Carolina – specifically Raleigh – right away. Did I know anyone?

Two weeks before this frantic call, I had attended the ABA annual meeting in New York and had participated in several ACA events. My wife and I had toured Sotheby's Auction House and sampled wines from its exceptional collection; we had attended a reception with ACA members from around the world at the Greenwich Village home of past president, Buddy Minton; and had attended

the annual ACA awards dinner at the Shakespeare Hotel. We had a great time. During these ACA events, I was fortunate to spend some time with former ACA president Jim Dorsett and his wife, Wynn. Jim and I had several mutual friends and I enjoyed getting to know Jim and his wife. Jim practices in Raleigh.

Back to the call. I did know an attorney in Raleigh through ACA. I called Jim late on that Friday afternoon and talked to him about the case. While Jim does not handle criminal cases, Jim knew the right attorney for the client. Because I had met Jim through ACA, I had someone on the ground who knew where I could turn to find quality representation for my client.

Face it – not just anyone would take a call on a Friday afternoon before a holiday weekend. Having that road paved for you, and for your client, is an asset that every lawyer needs to help build their practice, sustain a growing law office, and keep clients happy. That is why the ACA is so important to me, and while they may not know it, my clients. Could I have “Googled” for a contact; used or other search service? Sure. But actually knowing someone makes a difference

The ACA is a small enough group that it is easy to get to know other attorneys at our twice-annual meetings, and for those attorneys who are so inclined, is a welcome place to gain leadership positions and skill. We are well-established, known in the legal community, and respected. Lawyers who join the ACA come from diverse practice areas, but share a common desire to improve and enhance standards of practice, administration of justice, and discharge the responsibilities of the legal profession.

We hope that you will join us at our meetings in 2018, and that you will invite other attorneys to join. Other attorneys from your firm may join us and we hope that you will invite them. You can find our membership directly on the ACA website.

My best wishes to everyone in 2018 and I hope to see you soon.

August annual meeting

Thanks to everyone who joined us in New York!



Scholarships

The Scholarship Committee awarded two scholarships at the ACA annual dinner meeting in New York City.

The Committee awarded the \$3,000 Stanley Cohn and James Dorsett Scholarship to Erin Varley from [Penn State Dickinson Law School](#). She ranked 11th in her class and aspires to a career in human rights law. As a law student she has worked on an international convention against female genital mutilation. She has assisted immigrants who are survivors of human trafficking, and she has drafted a fictional advocacy problem for the International Criminal Court. She attended the Annual Meeting with her husband Pete and made an eloquent speech on behalf of the projects she has been working on.

The committee awarded the \$3,000 Lowell Jacobson scholarship to Nolan Downey from [DePaul University College of Law in Chicago](#). He ranked third in his class and as a student has been heavily involved assisting the Cook County Public Defender's office in juvenile and homicide cases. He also operates a homeless legal help desk on Saturday mornings and helps pro se parties in a domestic violence legal clinic to draft papers seeking emergency orders of protection.



Nolan could not attend the annual meeting, but sent a note that I read at the meeting. Both Erin and Nolan have had substantial financial needs throughout law school, so the committee was pleased to be able to make at least a slight dent in their debt load.

I thank the committee members, Buzz English, Tim Bertschi, Doug McCoy, Jim Myrick, Rosemary Giuliano, and Tom Forbes, who worked hard to plow through the numerous excellent applications in order to select Erin and Nolan.

*Wes Horton, chair
Scholarship Committee*



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