



# The State Bar *of California*

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## CLIENT SECURITY FUND

Date: May 28, 2020

To: Client Security Fund Commission

From: Lori Meloch, Program Director, Professional Support & Client Protection

Subject: Discussion and Consideration of Applications for CSF Commission Vacancies and Officers for Selection and Recommendation to Board of Trustees

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In order to administer the Client Security Fund, the Board of Trustees has established a Client Security Fund Commission, to which it appoints five members who serve at its pleasure or until the expiration of a term set by the Board (Rules of the State Bar, Title 3, Division 4, Chapter 1, Rule 3.421(A)). The Commission recommends members to be considered for appointment to the Board of Trustees. At its May 28, 2020 meeting, the Commission will consider applicants for appointment as recommendations to the Board of Trustees to fill the upcoming Commission vacancies, including new officers and Commission members.

The State Bar of California values broad-based representation and the diversity of membership within its committees and external entities. The Board of Trustees considers diversity to be essential to complying with its mission of public protection, and also seeks to ensure that membership for committees and external entities includes individuals with a depth of expertise, including but not limited to the following: geographic location; legal practice area; size of law practice; amount of professional experience; volunteer work; specific accomplishments; educational background; race; ethnicity; age; sexual orientation; and disability. The State Bar provides equal access to all applicants and complies with all applicable anti-discrimination laws in its appointment process.

Both Synthia Lee and Chair Shanae Buffington have terms that will expire in 2020, creating a public member vacancy and an attorney member vacancy. Vice-Chair Robert Bowman's term will also expire at the end of this year. Traditionally, the Vice-Chair is recommended to advance to serve as Chair. Generally, the next most senior member is asked to be Vice-Chair. The Commission may recommend that Vice-Chair Robert Bowman be appointed as Chair and serve an additional one-year term. The Commission may also request that Jordan Wright, the next most senior member, be recommended to become the Vice-Chair.

## **Officer Candidates**

For the Commission's consideration, information regarding Robert Bowman and Jordan Wright is below.

### **Robert C. Bowman, Jr. (Attorney Member)**

Robert C. Bowman, Jr. currently serves as an attorney-member and Vice-Chair of the Commission. Robert has been a successful member of the Commission since 2017, and his term is scheduled to end in September 2020. He is currently the owner and sole shareholder of the Law Office of Bowman and Associates in Sacramento. Robert's practice includes employment law, civil litigation, and family law, in addition to other general practice areas. Much of his practice consists of representing plaintiffs in bringing employment and discrimination actions against employers. He remains active in the legal community by serving as a member of the California Employment Lawyers Association and a pro-tem judge in El Dorado County. Robert's skill set and experience will be invaluable to the Commission through its next term, as he brings his vast knowledge of family law and employment law to the Commission. He has been an instructor for both the University of the Pacific and the University of Phoenix, and is an active volunteer in his community. Robert has demonstrated his desire and ability to devote his time to the Commission.

### **Jordan Wright (Public Member)**

Jordan Wright's verified commitment to public service and his prior experience as a government advisor and liaison has made him an invaluable addition to the Commission. After achieving his M.A. in Public Policy from Claremont Graduate University, and his B.A. in Political Science from the University of California, Riverside, Jordan has exhibited a history of serving his community as a member of several boards, commissions, and committees. Jordan is currently a policy advisor for the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors, where he advises the Board on issues related to health and human services. He has been a dedicated and reliable member of the Commission, and his knowledge and experience within the public sector provide a relevant perspective when evaluating applications.

### **New Commission Member Candidates**

The Commission also needs to recommend one new public member and one new attorney member. Below are summaries of the applicants' experience.

#### **Public Member Candidate**

##### **Joseph Dimino**

Joseph Dimino is the sole proprietor of a tax and financial services company. He prepares tax returns and advises more than 500 clients on their finances and retirement plans, and he represents clients before the IRS and the Franchise Tax Board. Joseph has experience analyzing complex financial problems and reviewing financial statements. He brings the perspective of a non-attorney who works with a large number of clients, and he has expressed his interest in serving on a commission with the primary objective of protecting the public from dishonest attorney conduct. Joseph also served in the military.

#### **Attorney Member Candidates**

##### **James Graff-Radford**

James Graff-Radford is a Deputy District Attorney in San Luis Obispo County. Beginning his career in Riverside County, he considers himself a career prosecutor with experience in a variety of cases, including general felonies and misdemeanors, licensing and consumer protection, financial elder abuse, and juvenile justice. James also has civil experience and has represented elderly clients in Consumer Legal Remedy Act lawsuits against an insurance company, a car dealership, and a fraudulent investment fund. His volunteer experience includes Big Brothers/Big Sisters of the Desert, The Jewish Federation, and the Tolerance Education Center. He believes his varied experiences would bring a valuable addition to the Commission.

##### **Carol Langford**

Carol Langford is a sole practitioner located in Benicia, California. She has previously volunteered with the State Bar as a member or as Chair of State Bar committees, including the Committee on Professional Responsibility and Conduct and the Rules Commission. She also has extensive experience as a legal educator. Carol was an adjunct professor of law at the UC Berkeley School of Law, she has been a guest instructor at other institutions, and she co-authored two textbooks on legal ethics. Carol has been a speaker at numerous conferences where she lectured on a variety of legal ethics topics. She enjoys working with the State Bar and is interested in participating in a new area.

### **Marcus Neupert**

Marcus Neupert is corporate in-house counsel for Canyon Partners, LLC., an investment advisory firm. Marcus takes his fiduciary role very seriously, as he oversees various outside counsel who provide legal services to investment funds, and his duties include closely monitoring funds held by outside counsel. Marcus worked full-time while attending law school, and he is admitted in both New York and California. He believes that his background brings a unique perspective that will provide the Commission with valuable insight.

### **Melanie O'Day**

Melanie O'Day is an attorney who works for the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA). Whereas Melanie is an attorney, she does not practice law in her current position; she conducts investigative exams of securities brokers and works with FINRA attorneys to determine which charges to pursue and what restitution might be appropriate. She believes her work prepares her for reviewing claims and applying the rules for fund eligibility. Melanie is also an active volunteer with multiple organizations, including the ABA, the Junior League, and the L.A. Conservancy. She states that her career as a financial regulator demonstrates her commitment to helping victims of fraud and would make her an asset to the Commission.

### **Patrick Wallen**

Patrick Wallen is in-house counsel for Sharespost, Inc., where he oversees approximately \$350 million in sales for more than 25 brokers in secondary market VC transactions. He has extensive experience with commercial contracts and provides fund management services. Patrick has served on the alumni board for the University of San Diego Bay Area Chapter and has recently accepted a volunteer position with the San Francisco District Attorney's office and is assigned to a special task force. In the letter of recommendation submitted on his behalf, Patrick is described as having a strong commitment to professional ethics and a desire to assist those being underserved by fellow attorneys.