



By Michael Warshauer

## An Inaugural Message from *Michael Warshauer*

Many words come to mind to describe my thoughts as I prepare to become the 53rd president of the Georgia Trial Lawyers Association. Fear is one. Angst is another. But there is one word that comes to mind above all others. That word is hope. As trial lawyers there is probably no word that keeps us going more than the expression of hope. Webster's tells us that hope is both an intransitive verb, "to cherish a desire with anticipation" and a transitive verb, "to desire with expectation of obtainment" or "to expect with confidence." Every time a client comes through our door we hope that we can improve their life. Every time we write yet another check to an expert witness, or buy another deposition transcript, we do so with the hopeful expectation that our money will help us obtain the compensation our clients need. And when we go to trial we "expect with confidence" we will prevail. We hope. It's what we do.

My thoughts about my next year as the president of GTLA are, like my thoughts for my clients, filled with hope. From a local point of view, I hope that the professional staff of GTLA continues to be the best, most efficient and most responsive staff of any trial lawyer association in the United States. I hope that our membership will grow to 2,500 members. But this hope is not just for numbers — my hope is that our membership will include more women, more minorities, more people

from outside Atlanta, and most importantly, more people who genuinely care about our profession and our collective clients. I hope that the continued growth of our local and regional TLA's will be a catalyst for this growth. And I hope that our CLE programs will continue to be instrumental in the professional education of our members; that every GTLA member attends at least one GTLA seminar in the coming year.

On a broader perspective, I hope to succeed with Georgia's legislature in ways that we have not in the past. I hope to not only fend off tort reform, or the 'socialization of justice' as I

help them understand that we are not anti-business, we are not anti-doctors and we are not anti-insurance. Instead, I hope to educate Georgia's lawmakers that we are champions of justice and fairness for all Georgia citizens. And I hope that we can work together to elect both Democrats and Republicans who not only understand our issues, but are also willing to fight for them under the Gold Dome, just as we do every day in our offices and courtrooms throughout Georgia and beyond.

But most of all, I guess I just hope that I will not let you and our clients down. I hope I have the strength to

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call it, but to actually pass some laws that will help Georgia's citizens by making Georgia a safer place to live. With the help of our dedicated staff and volunteer members, I hope to make a real connection with every single one of the 236 representatives and senators who control access to the courts and the availability of justice for the people of Georgia. I hope that we can

be as good as the best of the 52 presidents who preceded me. I will certainly look to many of them for advice in the year ahead. And I hope that you, the members of GTLA, will volunteer without being asked, and say yes when you are asked, to help us reach the goals that all of us hope to achieve — a Georgia where justice is available for all. ■