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BRIEFS

Winter/Spring 2019

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Inside this Edition:  
2019 Gala Pictorial



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# Table of CONTENTS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE	03
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF'S MESSAGE	04
JUDGE MARIO GODERICH CABA'S FIRST PRESIDENT: A PIONEER FOR THE CUBAN PEOPLE	06
A SEAT AT THE CABA ON CUBA COMMITTEE'S CONFERENCE ROOM TABLE	10
THE WRITING IS ON THE WALL: A \$15 MINIMUM WAGE EDGES TOWARD THE NEW NORMAL	18
CABA PRO BONO: COMMITMENT TO LEGAL SERVICES ADVOCACY	25
CABA'S FIRST FEMALE PRESIDENT SPOTLIGHT	28
45 YEARS CABA GALA	38
PAST PRESIDENTS DINNER	58
CABA ELECTIONS	62
CABA GETAWAY	66
CABA ON CUBA PANEL DISCUSSION	70
MEMBERSHIP RECEPTION	73
YOUNG LAWYERS NEW YEARS NETWORKER	76
AIT: UNCORKED	78



Featured on the cover is CABA's Special Edition 45th Anniversary logo.

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CABA Briefs is published bi-annually by the Cuban American Bar Association, Inc. ("CABA"). CABA is a non-profit voluntary bar association founded in 1974 by lawyers of Cuban descent. CABA's members include judges, lawyers, and law students of all backgrounds interested in issues affecting the Cuban community, as well as broader legal and human rights issues impacting minority communities as a whole. CABA's mission is to promote equality of our members; increase diversity in the judiciary and legal community; serve the public interest by increasing awareness to the study of jurisprudence; foster respect for the law; preserve high standards of integrity, honor, and professional courtesy among our peers; provide equal access

to and adequate representation of all minorities before the courts; facilitate the administration of justice; build close relationships among our members; provide mentoring and scholarship to law students nationally; and support the indigent community through the funding and administration of an effective pro bono legal assistance project and other community programs. Reproduction in part of any text, photograph, or illustration without written permission of the publisher is strictly prohibited. To submit an article or ad to CABA Briefs, please contact Frances Guasch De La Guardia at cababriefs@hotmail.com.

## President's MESSAGE



Dear CABA Friends and Colleagues,

As we embark on our efforts for 2019, I am truly honored and grateful to serve as your President. It is CABA's 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and this year, we celebrate and reflect on our history, our present and our bright future ahead! I have been an active member of CABA since my days as a law student at the FIU College of Law and have served on the CABA Board of Directors since 2010. Thus, CABA has been an integral part of my life for many years, and I deeply appreciate our organization's mission and its history.

Since I was a child, I have been passionate about serving our community and making a difference. These traits were ingrained in me as the daughter and granddaughter of Cuban political prisoners. They, and many others, struggled to keep their nation free and made many personal sacrifices along the way. My family's example inspires me every day, and I hope to continue their legacy as President of CABA. This year, I hope to advance CABA's role as a leader on judicial and legislative issues relevant to our

members and our community. Also, CABA must continue to be a strong voice for the return of human rights and the rule of law to Cuba during an ever-changing time in its history. CABA must continue to work for and offer our members opportunities to grow professionally. Lastly, CABA must continue to pursue funds for our law school scholarships through our Foundation and serve our community through CABA Pro Bono.

We must rededicate ourselves to our shared mission and consistently work "... to promote equality of our members; increase diversity in the judiciary and legal community; serve the public interest by increasing awareness to the study of jurisprudence; foster respect for the law; preserve high standards of integrity, honor, and professional courtesies among our peers; provide equal access to and adequate representation of all minorities before the courts; facilitate the administration of justice; build close relationships among our members; provide mentoring and scholarship to law students nationally; and support the indigent community through the funding and administration of an effective pro bono legal assistance project and other community programs."

From our humble beginnings in 1974, CABA members have persevered through difficult times of discrimination and financial hardship as new immigrants to the United States. Today, through 45 years of work and sacrifice, CABA has grown to become one of the most influential and prominent bar associations in the State of Florida. In these times, CABA's voice is needed not just to advocate for human rights and the rule of law in Cuba but also here in the United States and throughout Latin America. We must continue to be a strong voice in our community for the protection of our legal system, advancement of our member's professional careers and a voice for reason and social consciousness in our nation and in Cuba.

Thank you for all your continued support of CABA.

Yours in service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Garcia". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Maria D. Garcia  
CABA 2019 *President*

## Editor-In-Chief's MESSAGE



Dear CABA Readers:

It is with pleasure that we issue our Winter/Spring edition for your enjoyment. This edition commemorates the 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of CABA and features an article honoring our very first CABA President, the Honorable Judge Mario Goderich and our very first female CABA President, our indomitable Miami Dade County State Attorney Kathy Fernandez Rundle. Judge Goderich served from 1974-1975 and Ms. Fernandez Rundle served from 1991-1992. In this edition we spotlight the many accomplishments and noteworthy events by our CABA on Cuba committee throughout the last 45 years and we will continue to feature noteworthy events of the past 45 years in future editions. The edition also contains CABA events held in 2018-2019 including the installation GALA for President Maria Garcia which honored and celebrated CABA's 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We hope you enjoy the edition.

Taking a moment of personal privilege, I would like to thank the CABA Briefs committee members and my editors Kristina Maranges Prieto and Candice Balmori for their hard work making this issue of Briefs a reality. Additionally, a special thanks to our director of operations, Daniel Espinosa, for his contribution to this issue as well. Working on CABA Briefs has been a honor and a true labor of love ever since I accepted the role when I first joined the CABA board of directors. It is with mixed emotions that, after this year, I will step down from my position as Editor in Chief of the CABA Briefs. I do this in order to focus my attention on preparing for my upcoming term as president and to help raise funds for CABA GALA 2020. The 2020 GALA will be held on January 25, 2020 at the Intercontinental Hotel in Downtown Miami. Save the date and expect some new surprises and a roaring good time. I leave you in the very capable hands of Kristi and Candice. It has been a pleasure bringing you CABA Briefs for all these years.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frances De La Guardia". The script is fluid and cursive.

Frances De La Guardia  
*Editor-in-Chief*

Congratulations to Holland & Knight's

## Frances Guasch De La Guardia,

president-elect of the Cuban American Bar Association and the fifth Holland & Knight lawyer who will serve as CABA president.

Frances, a litigation partner in the firm's Miami office, will begin her term as president on January 1, 2020.

Holland & Knight has a long history of leadership within CABA, with four past presidents and several former board members. Miami Partners **Anna Marie Hernandez Gamez** (2016), **Vivian de las Cuevas-Diaz** (2012), **Raul Cosio** (1992) and **Jorge Hernandez-Toraño** (1989) all have served as president of the organization.

Holland & Knight thanks Frances, President Maria Garcia, the 2019 Board of Directors and all of the attorneys dedicated to CABA and to promoting diversity in the legal community.



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Jorge Hernandez-Toraño

# Judge Mario Goderich

## CABA's First President: A Pioneer for the Cuban People

---

By: Kristen L. Palacio, Esq.



In 1974 Judge Goderich became one of the first founding members and President of the Cuban American Bar Association. Before becoming President of CABA in Miami, Judge Goderich practiced law in Cuba. Judge Goderich was born in Santiago de Cuba, Oriente, Cuba. He attended high school in Virginia but returned to Cuba to complete his education after graduating. In 1957 he received his Doctorate of Civil Laws degree from the University of Havana. He then practiced law in Cuba with the firm of Castellanos & Goderich.

After practicing law in Cuba for several years, in 1961, during the Cuban Revolution, Judge Goderich immigrated to the United States. While working and supporting his

family, he attended the University of Miami School of Law and received his Juris Doctor in two-and a-half years, graduating in 1966. While he was ineligible for Bar admission and undergoing the naturalization process, Judge Goderich became a law librarian at the University of Miami Law Library and later became its director. During this time, he also became a professor at the University of Miami School of Law. He then became an American citizen, was admitted to The Florida Bar in 1969, and promptly became a member of the Dade County Bar Association.

During this time, and as a result of the Cuban Revolution, hundreds of thousands of Cubans began immigrating to the United States. By 1970, there were nearly 450,000 Cubans in the United States.<sup>1</sup> Seeing the number of Cubans who were acclimating to life in the United States, particularly in Miami, Judge Goderich saw a need for an organization to assist those individuals who were becoming or aspiring to become attorneys, just as he did. Judge Goderich and other founding members established CABA in Miami, Florida in 1974. He became CABA's first President for a one-year term from 1974 through 1975.

During his presidency, Judge Goderich recalls that CABA was—as it still is today—open to everyone, regardless of ethnicity. He, along with the other founding members, wanted CABA to be an open,

welcoming organization where individuals of all races, gender, and ethnicities could come together to work, form a common mission, and gather for more causal, relaxed events. Judge Goderich recalls fond memories from some of these casual gatherings, such as playing tennis with other members and supporters of CABA, including Wilkie D. Ferguson.<sup>2</sup> Judge Goderich was instrumental in forming CABA's mission, which remains the same today: increasing diversity in the judiciary and legal community and providing equal access and representation for all minorities before the courts.

In 1975, Judge Goderich was appointed as a judge of Industrial Claims. A few years later, in 1978, he was appointed as a judge for the Eleventh Judicial Circuit. He was reelected in 1980 and 1986. In 1990, Judge Goderich rose to the Third District Court of Appeal.

Despite his numerous professional and personal commitments, Judge Goderich still managed to publish several works including *The Role of the Judiciary in the New Constitution* and *Bill of Rights in the Colombian Constitution* and served on the Supreme Court Committee on Standard Jury Instructions in Civil Cases. He is a member of the American Bar Association and is a Fellow in the American Bar Foundation.

Judge Goderich also received numerous accolades throughout his career. He was recognized as



an Outstanding Judge by the Florida Council on Crime and Delinquency, he was presented with The Lawyers of the Americas Award by the University of Miami InterAmerican Law Review, received the Order of Democracy from the Republic of Colombia, and was the first recipient of the Francisco Garcia-Amador Award by the Center for Hispanic and Caribbean Legal Studies at the University of Miami School of Law. Judge Goderich also received the Jurist of the Year Award from St. Thomas University. He was also honored by Florida International University's Cuban American Bar Association through the creation of a merit scholarship in his name. In 2005, he received

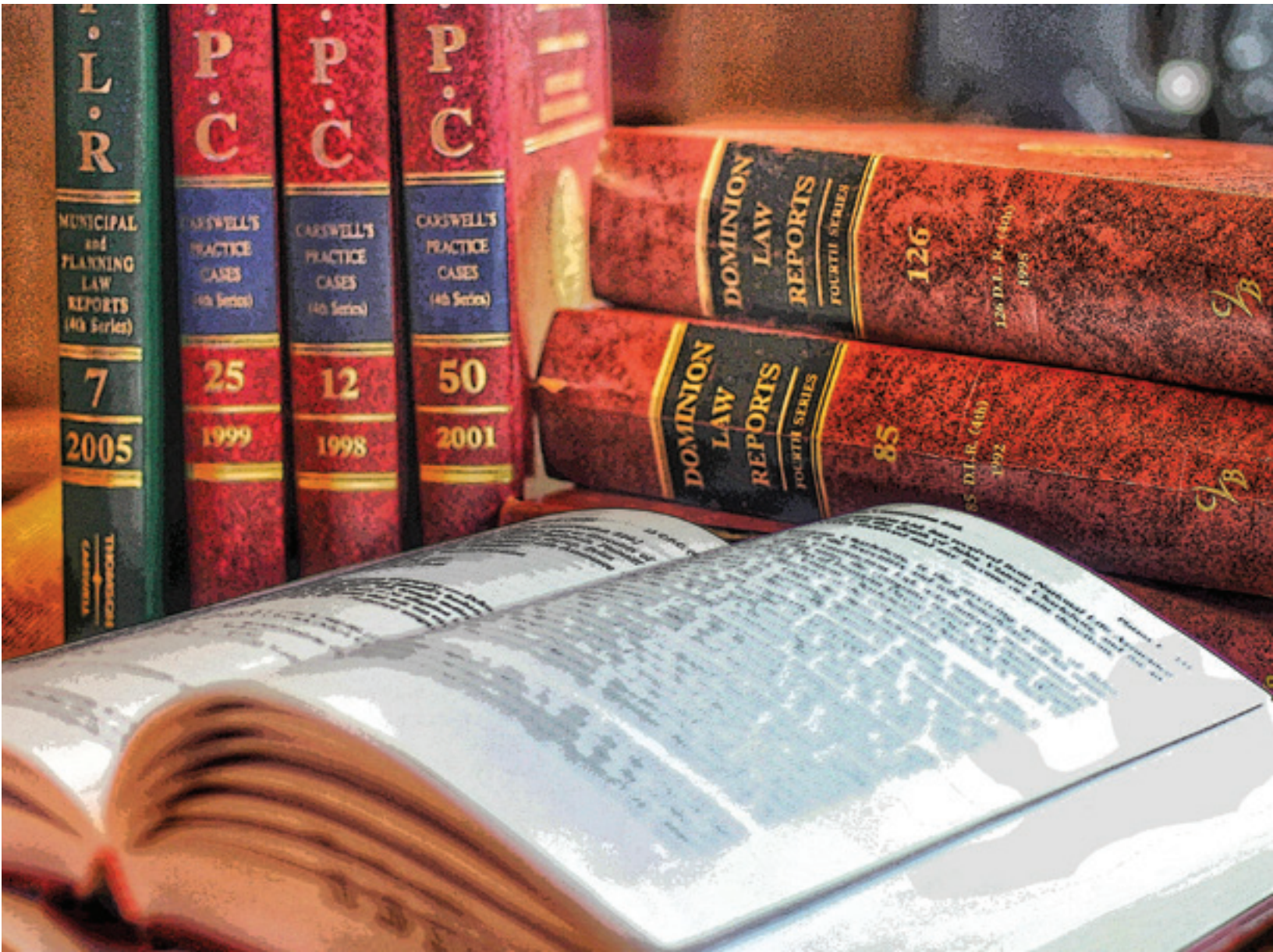
The Legal Ethics Award from the Dade County Bar Association.

Upon reaching the then-mandatory retirement age, Judge Goderich retired from the Third District Court of Appeal in 2005. Judge Goderich was the first Cuban-American judge for all three courts he presided over: Industrial Claims, Eleventh Judicial Circuit, and the Third District Court of Appeal.

Judge Goderich was a pioneer in the legal community. He played a key role in paving the way for so many Cubans and Cuban-Americans to become attorneys, Judges, and make a significant impact in their community, once foreign to them, but now one which they proudly call home.



**Kristen L. Palacio** is an attorney at Kim Vaughan Lerner LLP, a minority-owned law firm, and focuses her practice on litigating and resolving complex commercial, tort, employment and insurance disputes. Kristen is a member of CABA, the Florida Bar Diversity and Inclusion Committee and is Vice-Chair of the Broward County Bar Association's Hispanic Lawyers' Committee.





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# A Seat at the CABA on Cuba Committee's Conference Room Table

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By: Candice Balmori, Esq.

Last month I sat down at a conference room table neatly lined with printed agendas. I watched as suit-clad attorneys filed into the room in the evening hours, leaving case files on their office desks and exchanging afternoons spent posturing at the courtroom podium for the contemplation of a much different topic: Cuba. Warm greetings among new and well-known colleagues were traded, and as the meeting was called to order, each agenda item was met with thoughtful, articulate, sometimes differing, but nonetheless passionate perspective. The members of the CABA on Cuba Committee are comprised of Cuban-born U.S. attorneys, the U.S.-born children of Cuban exiles, and of those whose ties to the topics at hand are the product of an interest in a people who languish on an island located little more than 90 miles from our meeting room.

A commitment to the study, discussion, advocacy, and action on behalf of those who remain on the island today regularly brings each CABA member to this conference room table. The work of this committee is inspired by those in our profession, families, and communities who sacrificed and labored tirelessly so that, as attorneys and as CABA members, each of us today would have the platform to implement plans of action tailored to advocate for a free and democratic Cuba.

## CABA's History and the CABA on Cuba Committee

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The Cuban American Bar Association (CABA) began in 1974

as the product of a small group of Cuban-born attorneys adapting to a new system and market. Initially, these attorneys depended upon each other as resources to function in a foreign legal community. Over the course of time, CABA's purpose as an organization expanded. It began to promote the equality of its members within the legal profession. In the years to follow, CABA boasted further accomplishments and ultimately, it succeeded in establishing an influential organization where its members had ample networking opportunities and we are able to provide strong advocacy for the issues that are important to the organization.

Over the course of the last 45 years, CABA's organizational efforts have included the promotion of diversity in the judiciary, the establishment in 1984 of its esteemed Pro Bono Project that continues today, generous funding of scholarships for worthy law students, and the creation and expansion of a

successful mentoring program, among many others.

In addition to CABA's efforts domestically in the legal profession, it has also endeavored to educate our community on issues of importance relating to the reestablishment of the rule of law in a democratic Cuba, and relating to human rights issues on the island. To this end, CABA has participated in and organized various conferences, both independently and in coordination with other organizations, has drafted letters to and met with representatives of our local, state and federal government, has issued press releases, corresponded with Cuban dissidents, and has organized focus groups, seminars, and panel discussions aimed at exploring salient issues of the day.

Throughout the last 45 years, CABA's leadership has continually expanded opportunities empowering its membership to be voices within their communities, as well as to become advocates for



a community silenced by political oppression.

The CABA on Cuba Committee was established in 2005/2006 for the purpose of recommending to the CABA Board of Directors what CABA's position and role, if any, would be when a political transition occurs in Cuba. In February of 2019, in addition to maintaining its original purpose, the CABA on Cuba Committee crafted an additional goal statement. It reads as follows:

*The goal of the CABA on Cuba Committee is to notify, inform, and recommend courses of action, if any, to the CABA Board of Directors relating to various topics, inclusive of current events, with the objective of promoting and protecting human rights on the island and supporting the ultimate peaceful transition of law in Cuba through democratic processes that recognize an independent judiciary, a guarantee of human rights protections, the transparent direct election of legislators and executive officials, the release of all prisoners of conscience held in Cuban jails, the dissolution of all repressive internal state security organizations, the establishment of freedom of speech, religion and association, and the recognition of private property rights, among others.*

Reflecting on the past 45 years of CABA's advocacy, the following summaries highlight a sample of exemplary endeavors that CABA has undertaken in various fora throughout the years. While some of these examples pre-date the formal creation of the CABA on Cuba Committee, they nonetheless reflect the spirit of this organization in laboring towards a free and fair system of government for the people of Cuba. Further, these highlights in no way provide an exhaustive list of the many admirable activities that CABA has endeavored upon. As an organization, CABA is indebted



to its strong leadership (past and present) and to its membership for each and every action contributed in support of its goals.

#### CABA's Efforts in U.S. Courts: CABA Files Class Action Lawsuit On Behalf of Cuban Refugees Held in Guantanamo

In the summer of 1994, amid food shortages, electricity black-outs, and the economic collapse that accompanied the withdrawal of subsidized aid to Cuba from the Soviet Union, tens of thousands of Cubans began desperately taking to the sea in boats and rafts of questionable seaworthiness. In acts of desperation, the Cuban people launched the lives of their loved ones into treacherous waters they deemed less risky than life on the island itself. The U.S. Coast Guard intercepted more than 33,000 of these Cuban refugees at sea and diverted them to what was thereafter politically regarded as the "safe haven" of the U.S. Naval Station at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. After a Joint Communique with Cuba was issued regarding interception at sea, the United States adopted policies that gave the intercepted Cuban refugees three options: (1) remain in the Guantanamo camps (where dusty brown tarp tents surrounded by barbed wire unfolded over shared quarters of cramped cots); (2) return to sovereign Cuba and

seek formal relief through the U.S. Interests Section in Havana (and face political persecution from the Cuban government); or (3) travel to a third country (an option that was untenable for most of the refugees). As a result, tens of thousands of Cuban refugees remained for nearly a year in a sort of purgatory at the Guantanamo camps—caught somewhere between certain persecution in their home country and the hope of living in freedom in the United States.

As an organization, CABA was among those who sprang to action, serving as a lead named plaintiff among other individual refugees in a class action lawsuit that was filed shortly after a discussion with White House officials stalled.

On October 24, 1994, *CABA vs. Christopher*, 43 F3d 1412, 1419 (11<sup>th</sup> Cir.), cert denied, 516 U.S. 913 (1995), was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida. This lawsuit asserted causes of action under the First and Fifth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution regarding the refugees' due process rights to seek asylum in the United States, as they faced potential indefinite detention. This lawsuit also sought to give the refugees access to counsel for legal consultation, given that the option of repatriation would carry with it certain political persecution for those who were repatriated.

After CABA quickly filed a Temporary Restraining Order to block all repatriations, which was granted in CABA's favor,<sup>1</sup> the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit overturned the District Court's complete ban on repatriations, providing that they would be limited only to those who requested to return to Cuba. Moreover, the appellate court also permitted attorneys to visit the Cuban rafters at the Guantanamo camps. Within days and throughout November and December of 1994, attorneys traveled a handful at a time from South Florida to Guantanamo's naval station, with permission to

including due process; (2) whether attorneys have a First Amendment right to free association, such that they should be granted access to the camps; and (3) whether Haitian refugees have equal protection rights. The Court considered that the refugees were neither U.S. citizens nor within U.S. borders. As such, the Cuban refugees in Guantanamo were judicially declared migrants standing outside the U.S. territory and lacking any rights in U.S. courts. The U.S. Supreme Court thereafter denied writ of certiorari.

But the CABA attorneys had thoughtfully taken a two-front approach. Not only had they filed

to the aid of its Cuban brothers and sisters during this crisis.

### CABA's Efforts Before An International Legal Forum: CABA Files Petition With the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in the Wake of the Cuban Black Spring

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In March of 2003, the Cuban government unleashed a crackdown on human rights activists and independent journalists on the island. As a result, dozens of dissidents and members of the opposition to the Cuban regime were detained and arrested for having allegedly engaged in "subversive activities," "counter-revolutionary activities," and "activities against the State," as well as for the "dissemination of illegal propaganda and information." The specifics of these alleged violations of law, however, were never set forth in the course of the Cuban legal proceedings against these individuals. Moreover, violent detentions preceded the Cuban judicial proceedings which were scheduled nearly a month later, and the families of the detainees were notified of these legal proceedings only days before each was scheduled to take place.

The legal representation of the dissidents during these Cuban legal proceedings was undertaken by attorneys of the Cuban State. Aside from not freely choosing their counsel, the dissidents were not permitted to confer with their appointed counsel freely and in private. Further, reporters, diplomats and the general public were barred from attending the legal proceedings, none of which lasted more than a day. Prison sentences for these human rights activists and independent journalists ranged from six months to 28 years. Not surprisingly, the dissidents, many of whom were independent Cuban journalists, were convicted under Cuban law for engaging in activities such as (1) the publication of opinion pieces on Cuban economic and social affairs, (2)



stay on the base for only a couple of days at a time while they met with their clients.

Interviewing the Cuban refugees, these attorneys worked tirelessly to gather evidence showing that the repatriations were coerced and that every one of the Cuban refugees deserved direct entry into the United States. Nonetheless, on January 18, 1995, the Eleventh Circuit's opinion held that the Cubans (and Haitians) held in Guantanamo were without legal rights that are cognizable in United States courts. In so holding, the Court considered three questions: (1) whether "migrants in safe haven outside the physical borders of the United States have any cognizable statutory or constitutional rights,"

suit in the U.S. court system on behalf of their clients, but they also sought meetings with the highest levels of government in the United States. Ultimately, in May of 1995, Cuban refugees in Guantanamo were permitted entry to the United States via humanitarian parole as special entrants. These Cuban refugees began parole into the United States at a rate of up to 500 hundred a week until the end of January 1996, when the last flights from Guantanamo to the Homestead Air Force Base left, and the U.S. Government closed the refugee camps.

Recognizing the severity of the humanitarian crisis plaguing the Cuban refugees, CABA mobilized its resources, talents, and contacts, and tirelessly devoted its legal acumen

participation in groups regarded by the Cuban authorities as “counter-revolutionary,” or (3) having contact with individuals viewed as “hostile” to the Cuban government’s interests. The detainees were thereafter purposefully sent to prisons far from their places of residence, in an effort to impose hardship upon their families to be able to visit them. Most of the detainees were held in isolation and were refused medical care and religious ministrations. The few opportunities granted for house arrest were conditioned upon complete discretionary revocation and were granted solely for extreme medical reasons.

In response, on September 22, 2003, the Cuban American Bar Association petitioned the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (the “IACHR”) for Cuba’s violations of various provisions of the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man to the detriment of this group of 79 dissidents and members of opposition to the Cuban government. Nearly a year after the filing of CABA’s petition, the IACHR joined CABA’s petition along with a similar petition filed by the organization Directorio Democrático Cubano as a single case.

Not surprisingly, the Chief of the Cuban Interest Section in Washington, D.C. sent the IACHR a letter stating that the IACHR “[did] not have legal jurisdiction, and [that] the Organization of American States [did] not have the moral authority to pass judgment on the exercise of human rights in Cuba.” Nonetheless, the IACHR held that it had the authority to take cognizance of the facts of CABA’s petition, as the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man bound all member states of the Organization of American States, including Cuba.

CABA sent representatives to the hearing held on this matter.

In its October 21, 2006 Report No. 61/06, the IACHR concluded that the Cuban State was responsible for numerous violations of the American Declaration of the Rights

and Duties of Man to the detriment of those 79 prisoners that were detained by the Cuban State. These violations included, among others, (1) right to life, liberty and personal security; (2) right to equality before law; (3) right to freedom of investigation, opinion, expression and dissemination; (4) right to a family and protection thereof; (5) right to vote and to participate in government; (6) right of assembly; (7) right of association; (8) right of protection from arbitrary detention; (9) right to due process of law; (10) right to the inviolability and transmission of correspondence; and (11) the right to a fair trial.

As a result, the IACHR recommended that Cuba (1) order the immediate and unconditional release of the political prisoners, while overturning their convictions



insomuch as they were based on laws that impose unlawful restrictions on their human rights; (2) adopt measures necessary to adapt its laws, procedures and practices to international human rights legal norms; (3) redress the victims and their next of kin for pecuniary and non-pecuniary damages suffered as a result of its violations of the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man; and (4) adopt measures necessary to prevent a recurrence of similar acts.

Thereafter, and while still in Washington, D.C., CABA’s member representatives boldly attempted to

provide the Cuban Interests Section located in Washington, D.C. with a copy of this Report, but Cuba’s representatives refused to accept a copy of same. CABA’s unwavering support of the 79 Cuban dissidents who were unfairly imprisoned and its ability to procure the IACHR Report exposing and admonishing the practices of the Cuban government against its people was a truly remarkable achievement.

### CABA’s Efforts in Collaboration: The Draft Fundamental Transitional Law of the Republic of Cuba

Around 2006, shortly after it was formally created, the CABA on Cuba Committee began to explore the concept of drafting a detailed transitional law that could provide

the people of Cuba with a road map for a transitioning government. The Committee was motivated by a desire to mitigate the potential for an institutional vacuum to exist as a result of the sudden, immediate collapse of the current Cuban regime. The resulting Draft Fundamental Transitional Law of the Republic of Cuba (the “Draft Transitional Law”) was a document that contemplated the ending of the present totalitarian Cuban regime and set forth a proposed legal framework to provide a suggested path towards establishing a democratic government in its place.

It was designed as a tool for temporarily establishing and safeguarding democratic institutions in Cuba, until such time as a constitutional convention can be convened, where freely and democratically elected representatives of the Cuban population may meet and debate the merits of various constitutional proposals. In an effort to draft a document that both followed international public norms for transitional laws and was tailored to address Cuba's specific legal culture and needs, the Foro Juridico Cubano began several years of work on this project by reviewing many of the transitional laws that were used throughout the world in the last half century, studying Cuba's legal culture and history (including constitutions and other laws enacted prior to and after the 1959 Cuban Revolution), and seeking advice from public international legal scholars and practitioners involved in transitional governments in Eastern Europe and Latin America.

The Foro Juridico Cubano was created as part of the work of the CABA on Cuba Committee. Including representatives from CABA, Colegio de Abogados de La Habana en el Exilio, Colegio Nacional de Abogados de Cuba en el Exilio, Colegio de Notarios Publicos Cubanos, and la Asociacion Cubano-Espanola de Derecho, this group was focused on finding avenues to re-establish the rule of law and democracy in Cuba.

The final product of this group's collaboration, research, and drafting sets forth a series of general principles necessary to promote the rule of law and preserves Cuba's existing laws and institutions unless they conflict with these general principles or are abolished by the transitional government that would exist at that time. For instance, the Draft Transitional Law incorporates the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1948 by reference and declares any contrary existing laws to be void. This document also provides

the necessary legal foundation to facilitate rebuilding Cuba's infrastructure and to advance the standard of living for Cuban citizens in the process. It is focused on promoting reconciliation through norms that facilitate democratic legal processes available to the Cuban people as they determine their future in tomorrow's Cuba.

To date, the Draft Transitional Law remains a work in progress—a living document to be revised and adapted in the future to deal with particular circumstances that will exist in Cuba when the present regime ceases to exist and a period of transition commences. The monumental undertaking of this project by the CABA on Cuba Committee and its dedicated members exemplifies the spirit of collaboration among the Cuban people—those in exile and those on the island—building a necessary infrastructure to support development of the democratic institutions that Cuba deserves.

### CABA's Efforts before U.S. Policy-Makers: CABA's Congressional Briefing

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In September of 2011, CABA organized and held a briefing on Capitol Hill to discuss human rights violations in Cuba. Members of CABA traveled to Washington D.C., tasked with the important mission of updating U.S. lawmakers on the on-going human rights abuses by the Cuban government against its people. This event was not only held in Washington D.C. for the benefit of those in attendance, but was also streamed live via Skype to viewers, assembled in Miami. And, with the assistance of and collaboration with Radio and TV Marti, this briefing was broadcast to the people of Cuba.

The briefing included welcoming remarks and participation from several U.S. Congressional Representatives, remarks from the International Republican Institute's Regional Director of Latin America and the Caribbean, a presentation by Josefa Lopez Pena, the co-founder

of the Cuban dissident group the Ladies in White, and live telephonic presentations by Rene Gomez Manzano and Laritza Diversent, two independent lawyers who at the time resided in Cuba.

Each presenter served to inform participants and attendees of the status of human rights violations and abuses on the island. Further, each of the Cuban presenters, in their own right, lived under constant threat and fear of reprisals for exercising their basic freedom of speech and expression. Exploring the role of technology (via internet access, blogging, and the facilitation of communication abroad), the independent Cuban lawyers emphasized the ways in which such media can inform the international community of the human rights abuses, and promote a culture of petitioning or making demands on the Cuban regime via its own legal institutions.

With this, CABA identified its unique position in the legal community and used it to connect and facilitate dialogue and between U.S. policy-makers and independent Cuban attorneys in an effort for those in our nation's Capitol to gain a greater understanding of the issues facing Cuban citizens and dissident community leaders on the island.

### CABA's Efforts Today

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The CABA on Cuba Committee continues to work hard to foster thought leadership on the most salient issues facing the Cuban and Cuban-American communities. In September of 2016, the CABA on Cuba Committee organized a two-day conference where, through presentations and panel discussions, participants explored issues of importance to both the United States and Cuba including: developments in U.S. law and regulations relating to commerce, travel and finance in Cuba, the potential resolution of claims between the U.S. and Cuba, the legal, economic and structural issues affecting foreign investment in Cuba, and what an economic and



political transition in Cuba may look like in the future.

Most recently, in February of 2019, the CABA on Cuba Committee organized a panel discussion titled “The Cuban Constitution: Past, Present & Future.” This panel discussion began by exploring the history of the Cuban Constitution, its inception, various past iterations and current text. The panel also analyzed the proposed revisions made to the Constitution in July of 2018 that were thereafter proffered for approval in a referendum. The panel’s analysis of the revised Cuban Constitution included a comparative review of international human rights law, as well as examples of case-specific judicial proceedings on and off of the island where provisions from the Cuban Constitution were invoked for the benefit of advancing legal arguments that ran contrary to actions undertaken by the Cuban regime.

The second CABA on Cuba panel discussion of 2019, titled “The International Trade of Cuban Medical Professionals: A Human Rights Perspective” will take place at the end of May. This panel discussion will explore issues facing Cuban medical professionals who are exported abroad through employment programs orchestrated by the Cuban regime, and the human rights and international legal implications that arise with these practices, including wages issues, restrictions on movement, and potential human trafficking implications. With each panel discussion organized by the

CABA on Cuba Committee, the organization continues to place emphasis on efforts for awareness, analysis and calls to action.

### The Conference Room Table

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Many of CABA’s members remember living under the Cuban regime, where policies based in communist ideology and the imposition of power stifle economic advancement, silence freedom of expression, manifest fear of persecution in response to dissent, and inadvertently relegate creative industriousness to a black-market exchange of basic necessities. For others, this reality is a part of a personal family history that nonetheless shapes their perspective.

As Cuban-American attorneys practicing law in institutions that promote an independent judiciary, freedom of association, and a fair and democratic electoral process, CABA and the CABA on Cuba Committee has used its platform to advocate, educate, and advance these ideals. The composition of the CABA on Cuba Committee boasts seasoned legal practitioners and newly-minted associate attorneys. It contemplates introspection as much as it facilitates open dialogue. Its members exchange news articles and offer thoughtful, vibrant, and inclusive perspective. Together, the power of the CABA on Cuba Committee’s advocacy resounds jointly in its efforts, programming, and projects. But most importantly, our members meet regularly around

that conference room table to give voice to a cause and a people who continue to be denied a seat as advocates at their own proverbial table across the Florida Straits.

<sup>1</sup> “On October 25, 1994, upon learning that at 11:30 a.m. that day the government would return to Cuba, by plane, twenty-three Cuban migrants who had previously volunteered for repatriation, the Cuban Legal Organizations and the individual Cuban plaintiffs filed an emergency motion for a temporary restraining order and request for an emergency hearing to block the repatriation. Approximately one minute before the plane was to take off, the district court verbally ordered the government to halt the repatriation of these migrants.” *CABA vs. Christopher*; 43 F3d 1412, 1420 (11<sup>th</sup> Cir.), *cert denied*, 516 U.S. 913 (1995).



**Candice Balmori, Esq.** is an attorney with RG Law Group in Miami and practices primarily in the fields of corporate law, commercial and real property litigation, and probate. She is also a Florida Supreme Court Certified Circuit Civil Mediator. She holds a bachelor’s degree from Harvard University, as well as a J.D. and Certificate in International and Comparative Law from Tulane University Law School.



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# The Writing is on the Wall: A \$15 Minimum Wage Edges Toward the New Normal

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By Valerie K. Ferrier

As Democrats take over the House of Representatives this month, some will push to increase the federal minimum wage, which

has remained stagnant at \$7.25 per hour for the past decade. Not content to wait for Congress, the “Fight for 15” movement has scored

victories throughout the country by increasing wages locally. Many states and localities will be or have already begun raising the minimum



wage incrementally until they reach \$15. Against this shifting backdrop, employers with operations in multiple cities and states must be aware of different local minimum wage rates, even if such rates differ from those in the rest of the state, and must prepare to pay more.

Just six years ago, fast food workers earning \$7.25 per hour began demanding more than double that, and the Fight for 15 movement was born. Although nearly half the states, especially in the south, still follow the federal rate, municipalities have increasingly sought to impose higher wage requirements of their own. Several cities already impose a \$15 minimum wage for at least some workers, including Seattle, San Francisco and New York City. Many others are considering measures to do the same. No state has yet implemented a statewide \$15 minimum wage.

Some local and citizen-initiated efforts to increase the minimum wage have met with resistance from their states. For example, hundreds of thousands of Michigan voters approved a ballot measure to increase the state's minimum wage to \$12 per hour by 2022. The outgoing legislature, however, passed the measure in September, specifically to keep it off the general election ballot in November. This allowed the legislature to be able to amend the law. Michigan workers will now have to wait until 2030 to see a \$12 minimum wage. And though tipped workers were among the intended recipients of the ballot measure, they are excluded under the amended law.

Similarly, Kansas City passed a measure implementing a \$10 "living

wage," with gradual increases to \$15 by 2022. (Missouri's minimum wage increased to \$8.60 on January 1, 2019). However, Missouri law prohibits municipalities from imposing a higher wage requirement than the state. Thus, paying the higher "living wage" remains voluntary.

And employers in some states are facing pressure from the business community. In Florida, where the minimum wage increased by twenty-one cents on the first day of 2019, to \$8.46 per hour, slightly above the federal rate, some of the state's largest employers have agreed to a \$15 minimum wage for their employees.

Employers with operations in multiple states face the burden of administering multiple applicable minimum wages, keeping track of not only the state mandated wage, but also any local rate that may be higher. An employer with minimum wage employees who work in more than one minimum wage jurisdiction face even more complications. If, for example, an employee works in a large metropolitan area with multiple wage rates, or transfers between a company's locations, the employer must pay them based on where the work was performed. Moreover, if that employee worked any overtime, the rate would have to be calculated based on the rate of the location in which the overtime hours were performed. As a practical matter, in such cases, it would be easier for the employer to simply pay the highest minimum wage for all hours worked. Doing so would both avoid the cost and difficulty of keeping track of which hours were worked in which location, and would also reduce potential liability for underpayment.

Nevertheless, the historically low unemployment rate, combined with recent decisions by several companies to pay their employees at least \$15 per hour, will put further pressure on employers across all industries to increase the minimum pay for their workforce, regardless of whether the law requires them to do so.

In the near future, a \$15 minimum wage will likely be the new reality for most, if not all employers, no matter where they do business. This will be due to the practical difficulty of keeping track of and administering ever-changing annual wage increases in different cities and states (which may go into effect on different dates), as well as increased competition from employers willing to pay a higher rate. The multiplicity of state and local laws affecting the minimum wage creates a legal thicket for employers with operations throughout the U.S. Due diligence now is advised to ward off potential lawsuits in 2019.



**Valerie K. Ferrier** is an attorney and counselor with more than a decade of experience. She represents employers in litigation and counsels her clients on risk management, HR issues, and legal compliance.



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# CABA PRO BONO: COMMITMENT TO LEGAL SERVICES ADVOCACY

By Lia Catalina Lopez, Esq.



otherwise have access it. Today, providing free legal services to underprivileged people is essential to shrink the justice gap. According to a report by the Legal Services Corporation, 86% of the civil legal issues encountered by low-income Americans received inadequate or no legal attention.<sup>1</sup> Throughout Florida, the legal needs of low-income individuals are short of being met, thus, the work of legal aid organizations like CABA Pro Bono is crucial to meeting these needs.

Currently, the organization is staffed with 5 full time attorneys, who like Leslie—a former litigator at White & Case in New York—left private practice to dedicate themselves to pro bono work full time. Besides the attorneys, the organization also has an office manager, a legal assistant and a paralegal. CABA Pro Bono is funded by grants

Program, the CABA Domestic Violence Program, and the CABA Immigrant Children's Program, the organization provides legal services in various legal areas while partnering and assisting other organizations to make an impact in the community. Lesley recounts, as an example, the case of a teenager from El Salvador who was abandoned by his parents after arriving to the United States in 2014. After his case was handled by CABA Pro Bono he obtained his permanent legal residency. He is now a self-sufficient FPL employee who makes a good living. The reward, says Leslie, is when former clients call to tell her how well they are doing and how their lives are on the right track after facing adversity.

Lesley estimates that the organization served over 1800 people in 2018. Today more than ever, CABA Pro Bono's legal services

“We don't want to say no to people, when we know that saying yes will change their lives forever.” - Lesley Mendoza

CABA Pro Bono was established by the Cuban American Bar Association in 1983 to provide legal services to low-income Hispanic people in our community. Lesley Mendoza, who joined the organization in 2013 as its Executive Director, says that CABA Pro Bono is focused on changing lives by taking difficult cases to ensure ensuring people have access to due process of law and justice. The organization is committed to providing effective legal representation to marginalized communities who would not

from the State of Florida, Miami Dade County's Community Based Program, The Children's Trust, The Miami Foundation, the Florida Bar Foundation, private donations, and fundraising efforts by CABA like Art in the Tropics, the annual Marlins Night, and the annual CABA Gala.

But, what makes CABA Pro Bono so special? Lesley says it is the organization's commitment to a holistic approach to legal services. Through the CABA Human Trafficking Victim's Representation

are in high demand. With clients in Miami Dade, Broward, Martin, Indian, Collier, Hillsborough and Lee counties, and with a staff of 8 people, CABA Pro Bono is always in need of volunteer attorneys and law students willing to donate their time and legal services and be trained by mentors. As the organization continues to grow, looking to expand their services in other legal areas, it seeks more of what makes it so special: Commitment. That is, commitment to impact lives and to





meet the growing demands of those marginalized in our community.

Recently, CABA Pro Bono has partnered with the Miami-Dade Veterans Treatment Court. The Veterans Court is a specialized court, implemented in the Fall of 2016 after it received a Federal Grant from the Bureau of Justice. It was created to divert eligible veterans, who have been accused of non-violent, felony offenses to a rehabilitation program for treatment in lieu of incarceration. To be eligible for the program, the veteran must have a diagnosed mental health condition, substance abuse disorder, or both. The Veterans Court substitutes the criminal court system for an evidenced-based treatment and problem-solving model. The program is completely voluntary. The veteran's progress through the program is Court-monitored by a judge, veteran health care professional, and case manager. It is structured to take a minimum of 14-months to complete. To date, the court has assisted approximately 60 veterans who have either completed or are in the process of completing the rigorous program.

The program's success rests on the collaborative effort of the VA

Health Care Network, the Office of the State Attorney, the Office of the Public Defender, the Administrative office of the Courts, volunteer mentors, Miami Dade Department of Corrections, community Health Care providers such as the South Florida Behavioral Health Network, veterans' organizations and other community partners such as CABA Pro Bono. Circuit Court Judge Marisa Tinkler Mendez, an Associate Administrative Judge in the Criminal Division, who has led the development and implementation of the Veterans Treatment Court, says that the program is structured and designed to provide treatment and rehabilitation in a holistic atmosphere. The veterans in the program benefit greatly and show progress when given the tools and support needed to address their mental health and substance abuse issues as well as collateral issues such as housing, education, unemployment and various legal issues unrelated to their criminal charges. Recently, CABA Pro Bono has agreed to partner with the Miami Dade Veterans Treatment Court to provide legal services to veterans in the program who may have family and custody, immigration and other legal issues

to addressed in civil court. Judge Tinkler Mendez says she has already seen the positive impact that CABA Pro Bono legal representation has provided to several of the veterans in the Treatment Court Program. "This legal assistance for our veterans who are dealing with serious mental health and substance use disorders eases their stress and allows them to focus entirely on their treatment. Ultimately, this leads to their success. They greatly improve their quality of life, and become productive, law-abiding members of our community" says Judge Tinkler Mendez. "This is a win-win for all".

CABA Pro Bono's growth and impact in our community has created a high demand for its services in Florida. The continued commitment from all CABA members is critical to provide legal services to low-income communities. Public service is essential to furthering the legal profession and impacting the lives of individuals and the community in general. Please contact Lesley Mendoza at [lesley@cabaprobono.com](mailto:lesley@cabaprobono.com) to volunteer or donate to CABA Pro Bono.

<sup>1</sup> Measuring the Civil Legal Needs of Low-income Americans. 2017 Justice Gap Report, Legal Services Corporation, June 2017. <https://www.lsc.gov/sites/default/files/images/TheJusticeGap-FullReport.pdf>



**Lia Catalina Lopez** is an Attorney Fellow at Florida International University's Office of the General Counsel. She received her Juris Doctor, with honors, from FIU College of Law in 2018 and her first law degree from Universidad de Cartagena, Colombia in 2012.

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# First Female President Spotlight

By: Viviana Mendiola, Esq.



As CABA celebrates its 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we underscore its milestones, including the election in 1991 of CABA's first female president—Miami-Dade County's State Attorney, Katherine Fernandez Rundle. Not only was she the first female CABA President, but she

was also Miami-Dade County's and Florida's first Cuban-American State Attorney. She has been re-elected various times since 1993. Before that, she served for 15 years as an Assistant State Attorney and thereafter as Chief Assistant State Attorney. Her comments for this

article bespoke her decades-long and prescient commitment to cultural and gender inclusivity.

Her ties to CABA preceded her presidency. In 1974, her father, Dr. Carlos Benito Fernandez, helped found CABA to "bring a focus to issues and concerns that were not being sufficiently addressed by the then-existing legal establishment." She recalls her father telling her that having an accent was considered an impediment. Years after her father passed, former State Attorney Richard E. Gerstein told her that he had wanted to hire her father as an Assistant State Attorney but that his "Cuban accent" was too strong for jury appeal. "Those were the challenges facing our founding fathers," she noted. Foreshadowing a family legacy of "firsts," he eventually became Miami's first Hispanic Judge.

She joined CABA in 1977, 14 years before becoming its first female President. When asked how her time as CABA President influenced her as a lawyer, she observed that when she was elected, "the winds of change were beginning to blow through Miami-Dade's legal community. I had run for CABA President on a platform of expanding the membership beyond just Cuban-American lawyers...In today's vernacular, I ran to increase diversity within the organization and eliminate a feeling of 'exclusivity.' Many notable advocates, such as our beloved Osvaldo Soto fought by my side. I believe that my election proved that CABA's membership too, agreed that exclusivity is not a desired outcome and voted for inclusivity, diversity and embracing all lawyers that believed in CABA's mission and principles. Working as a Chief Assistant State Attorney, I knew first-hand of the great benefits of working in a diverse legal

community with many different points of view. I feel that I managed to bring that perspective to CABA.”

She feels that her most laudable accomplishment in serving as CABA’s President was laying the foundation for an expanded membership. This article provided an opportunity for her to consider the timely issue of gender equality in the legal profession. When asked how she would characterize today’s climate, she remarked that “we have come far in establishing greater gender equality in the legal profession, but there is still far to go...While we have earned great respect, I wish to emphasize that it was earned, not just given. But there are still barriers that need to be broken. Today, our Chief Judge Bertila Soto and the many succeeding female CABA presidents have proven through hard work and dedication that quality leadership can breakthrough some outdated stereotypical myths. Just as corporate America has few female leaders running our largest industries, our

prestigious legal firms have far too few female Managing Partners and Equity Partners. Progress is indeed occurring, but the pace is slow. We know that there are divisions in our community relationships which disturb and separate us, but the things which unite us are greater than the things which divide us. Uniting us was the dream of those who held CABA’s first organizational meeting at the former Casa Juancho Restaurant. I also know that is still CABA’s dream today.”

11<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court Judge, Maria Elena Verde, who is a former Miami Assistant State Attorney, recounted her first impression of State Attorney Fernandez Rundle. Judge Verde remembers that in the 1990s, during training for new prosecutors, State Attorney Fernandez Rundle reminded them that on the other side of a charging document stood a human being, and every decision made by the prosecutors would affect a human life. Such advice was a defining moment for Judge Verde, who has

since remembered those words when State Attorney Fernandez Rundle’s name is mentioned. This leitmotif of fairness is a credit to State Attorney , whose tenure as CABA President will be remembered as a watershed year.



**Viviana Mendiola, Esq., LL.M.** is a Case Manager at Lawson E. Thomas Courthouse Center in Miami, Florida. Prior to working for the judiciary, she worked in the private industry as an Associate Attorney in the field of real estate law. She received an LL.M. degree from the University of Miami School of Law, a J.D. from the UPR School of Law, and a B.A. in English and International Relations from FIU.



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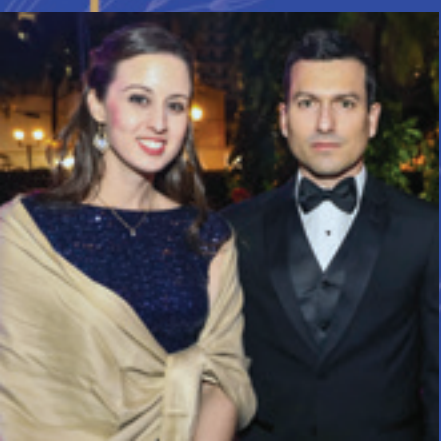
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The 45th Annual CABA Gala was held on January 26th at the Ice Palace Studios in Wynwood. Maria D. Garcia, a CABA board member since 2010, was installed as the 45th President of CABA. Over 800 guests attended the gala to celebrate 45 years of CABA.







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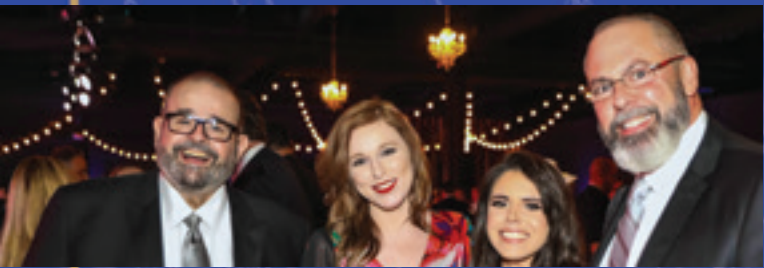
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# 2018 Past Presidents DINNER

Hosted by IberiaBank, the Annual Past Presidents Dinner was held at Caffe Abbracci Restaurant in Coral Gables in October 2018. President Maria D. Garcia welcomed the Past Presidents and CABA's Board of Directors at the annual end-of-the-year event.





# 2018 Past Presidents

## DINNER





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# 2018 CABA ELECTIONS

CABA's annual elections were held in November 2018 at City National Bank in Coral Gables. CABA's membership voted in record numbers, electing Frances G. De La Guardia as President-Elect, Haydee Sera and Candice Balmori as new Board members and re-electing Nory Acosta-Lopez, Daniel Mendez, Michael Piñeiro and Giselle Gutierrez to the 2019 Board of Directors.







**¡Feliz aniversario, CABA!**

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Hosted at the Ocean Reef Club in Key Largo over Labor Day Weekend, the 2018 CABA Getaway attracted over 75 attendees, including judges, board members, business people and more. Several events were held throughout the weekend, including a Kids Fishing Tournament, a pig roast and the ORC Street Fair.







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# The Cuban Constitution: Past, Present & Future

## THE CUBAN CONSTITUTION: PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

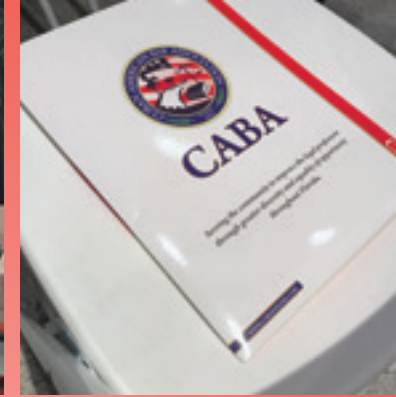
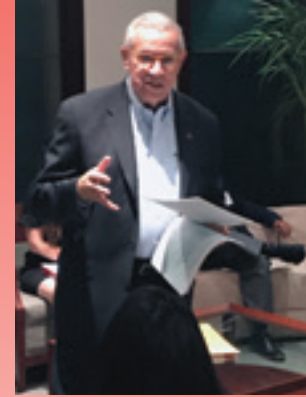
On February 20, 2019, CABA held its first panel discussion of the year titled “The Cuban Constitution: Past, Present and Future,” which was graciously sponsored by the law firm of Weiss Serota Helfman Cole & Bierman in Coral Gables, Florida. This panel discussion sought to explore the newly proposed revisions to the Cuban Constitution among CABA’s membership and event attendees. The panel discussion was organized by the CABA on Cuba Committee in partnership with FIU’s Cuban Research Institute and Casa Cuba, and was moderated by CABA on Cuba Co-Chair and Director, Candice Balmori. The esteemed panelists for this event included Dr. Andy Gomez (Director, Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies— Retired, and Assistant Provost, Dean of International Studies & Senior Fellow for Cuban Studies, University of Miami— Retired), Aldo Leiva, Esq., (attorney with the law firm of Baker Donelson), Omar Lopez Montenegro (Human Rights Director for the Cuban American National Foundation), and Leonel Morejon Almagro (Former Amnesty International Prisoner of Conscience, Former Cuban Attorney, FRP/CFI-FTR, Public Defender, Vero Beach, Florida).

This panel discussion began by exploring the history of the Cuban Constitution, its inception, various past iterations and current text. It then reviewed and analyzed the 2018 proposed revisions of to the Cuban Constitution, which were voted upon on by the Cuban National Assembly of People’s Power in December of 2018, and which were subsequently scheduled to be presented to the Cuban plebiscite on February 24, 2019 as a constitutional referendum. Analysis by the panelists of the new Cuban Constitution included a comparative review of normative provisions of international human rights law. It also included examples of case specific civil and criminal proceedings previously filed by Cuban attorneys on behalf of their clients, which applied Cuban Constitutional provisions and Cuban civil law to judicial proceedings both on and off of the island. CABA’s first panel discussion of the year boasted an impressive turn-out of attorneys, law students, and community leaders.

The CABA on Cuba Committee would like to thank each of the panelists who participated in this event and shared thoughtful analysis with our members and event attendees, FIU’s Cuban Research Institute and Casa Cuba for its partnership in this endeavor, and Weiss Serota Helfman Cole & Bierman for its generous sponsorship of this important discussion.









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# “WELCOME BACK” MEMBERSHIP RECEPTION



On February 13<sup>th</sup>, CABA held its “Welcome Back” Membership Reception at Kozyak Tropin & Throckmorton. Ariana Fajardo Orshan, U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Florida, attended the event and was honored with the 2019 Osvaldo Soto Legacy Award.





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# Young Lawyers New Year's Networker

CABA kicked off 2019 with its annual Young Lawyers New Year Networker at House Kitchen and Bar on January 17. Professional Bank sponsored the event which brought together over 100 lawyers and judges to celebrate and welcome in the new year. Haydee Sera and Daniel Mendez co-chaired the event and thank everyone who attended



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CABA | 14th Annual

# AIT: Uncorked

A Grand Tasting of Food, Wine, Beer & Spirits

One of CABA's premier events, Art in the Tropics, celebrated its 14th year with a re-invented and re-imagined concept by CABA's amazing AIT chairs, Olivia Rodriguez and Krisi Maranges, and CABA's Director of Operations, Daniel Espinosa. The event took place on September 29, 2018 at The Penthouse at Riverside Wharf. The event is now called AIT: Uncorked! The new concept is a food and wine tasting event with live entertainment, like the South Beach Food & Wine Festival. The event also included its first ever "CABA Wine Cellar" raffle with amazing wines provided by CABA's Past Presidents and other donors. The event was attended by over 400 guests who experienced a grand tasting of Food, Wine, Beer & Spirits. The event raised nearly \$60,000 for CABA Pro Bono Project.

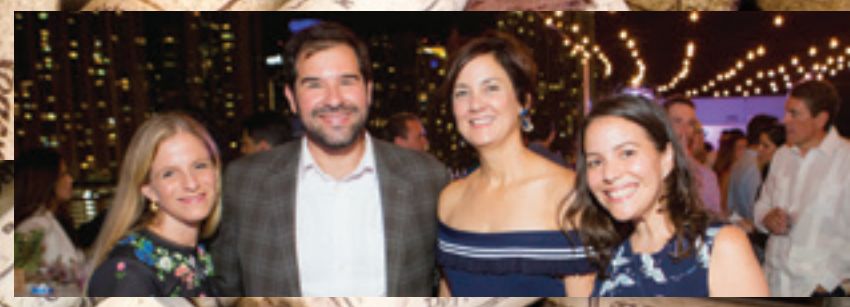








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1975



Manuel Vazquez  
1976



Osvaldo N. Soto  
1977



Luis Figueroa  
1978



Jose Villalobos  
1980



Manuel A. Crespo  
1981



Frank Angones  
1982



Rogelio del Pino  
1983



Thomas F. Gamba  
1984



Rene V. Murai  
1985



Armando Bucelo  
1986



Marnuel R. Morales, Jr.  
1987



Jose A. Garrido, Jr.  
1988



Jorge Hernandez-Toraño  
1989



Roberto Fleitas  
1990

## PAST PRESIDENTS 1991–2006



**Katherine Fernandez Rundle**  
1991



**J. Raul Cosio**  
1992



**Antonio Marin**  
1993



**Arturo Alvarez**  
1994



**Fernando S. Aran**  
1995



**Luis N. Perez**  
1996



**Eduardo Cosio**  
1997



**Hector J. Lombana**  
1998



**Sergio L. Mendez**  
1999



**Oscar Marrero**  
2000



**Michael Diaz, Jr.**  
2001



**Eugenio Hernandez**  
2002



**Victor M. Diaz, Jr.**  
2003



**Ramon A. Abadin**  
2004



**Antonio C. Castro**  
2005



**Corali Lopez-Castro**  
2006

## PAST PRESIDENTS 2007–2018



**Elizabeth M.  
Hernandez 2007**



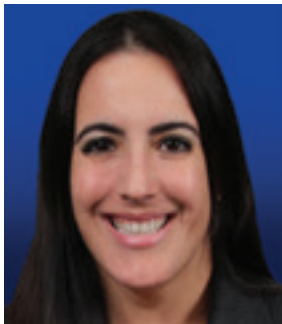
**Marlene Quintana  
2008**



**Roland Sanchez-  
Medina 2009**



**Manuel A. Garcia-  
Linares 2010**



**Victoria Mendez  
2011**



**Vivian de las Cuevas-  
Diaz 2012**



**Sandra M. Ferrera  
2013**



**Ricardo Martinez-Cid  
2014**



**Manny Crespo, Jr.  
2015**



**Anna Marie Hernandez-  
Gamez 2016**



**Javier A. Lopez  
2017**



**Jorge L. Piedra  
2018**



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Shotgun: 1:00 PM  
Dinner: 6:00 PM

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Giselle Gutierrez is pleased to serve as Treasurer of the CABA Board of Directors. Giselle will be one of the presenters at our **29<sup>th</sup> Annual Labor & Employment Law Seminar** on **Friday, May 17, 2019** at Hard Rock Stadium.

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A photograph of a modern office lounge. In the foreground, there are several light-colored armchairs and a low coffee table with a vase of purple flowers. In the background, large windows offer a view of a city skyline with several skyscrapers under a clear sky.

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