

CBA-CLE President April Jones

Leading through Education

BY HALEY HEMEN

“**T**he pandemic has changed my life so much personally and professionally,” says April Jones, the founder and CEO of the Jones Law Firm, PC. “So much was in flux for me and my clients who had pressing legal matters.” With over 20 years of experience guiding families through some of the most difficult, complex moments in their lives, Jones, who takes on the mantle of CBA-CLE president this term, was uniquely positioned to offer genuine, meaningful advice for such an uncertain time.

“My goal was to be a resource for the community,” she says, “so I started a program about COVID-19, finances, and the future.” She and her team put together a book for clients full of pandemic-related scenarios and suggested ways to handle legal issues stemming from them. She also worked extensively with parents on such issues as how to adapt to online school and navigate pandemic-related custody issues. And she created a webinar series in which she spoke with a therapist, an educator, and a financial advisor to address some common questions arising from the pandemic.

The webinar series discussed practical issues, like how to navigate the legal system when the courts are closed, how to respond to changes in income as a result of shutdowns, and how to deal with the general sense of uncertainty that prevailed during the height of the pandemic. Particularly important was advice for parents. Speaking with therapist Teri Karjala, Jones addressed how to talk to your children about COVID-19, strategies to come together with your ex-spouse for the good of your children, and managing risk when circumstances might be beyond a parent’s control.



Karjala and Jones also discussed how the pandemic has shifted our baseline from a calmer state of being to a state of higher anxiety, meaning that any adverse event may push an already anxious person into a state of panic. But, they explained, there’s a silver lining: the more we learn to regulate ourselves in times of change and uncertainty, the more resilient we can be under pressure.

The Power of Leadership

Listening to Jones speak, you get a sense of how steady and commanding a presence she is. Her clients would tell you as much. In reviews, time and again, clients mention her compassion and how effectively and efficiently she and her team handled their cases. It’s part of her mission statement, after all, to help clients “get through the hard part of ending a relationship and to find a way forward to a better life. By

the time most people have reached out to us they have already decided to make changes to their relationships, and they need help to get through the legal system with as much dignity and fearlessness as possible.”

Knowing this, it’s not surprising to learn she has been a steady, effective leader in a time of intense change. “As a leader of my firm, I had to figure out how I empower and equip everyone who works with me to fulfill their duties when so much was in flux. I’m proud to say that we have continued to grow the firm and serve clients at a high level, and it’s my honor to lead our staff in those endeavors.”

Jones has always been drawn to service through leadership. “I’ve had the incredible opportunity to serve in leadership roles within the law and on local boards, too, and it means a lot to me to be able to give back and share my experiences and learnings.” Leading CBA-CLE is a natural fit “because I’m a big believer in the importance of how we provide education. I’m also very personally committed to professional development because I want to show up for my team and for my clients with the best knowledge, strategies, and insight for them. I’ve been involved in many CBA-CLE events over the years and I’m proud to be a part of that legacy now.”

It’s a role Jones doesn’t take lightly. Throughout her career, she has been involved in so many community service endeavors that she is selective about what she commits to. “First, I know that I cannot say ‘yes’ to everything,” she admits. “I always carefully evaluate my commitments so that I feel confident about the roles I do take on. I want to know that I can show up in the best way possible.”

Her ability to show up has been greatly aided by a great team. “I keep an organized schedule and rely on my team to help me do that. By letting my team know about what is most important to me and things on my calendar that take priority, I’ve empowered them to help me carve out the time I need. In releasing so much control over my calendar, I’ve been able to get more time back and set aside the time needed not just to participate in my board and committee appointments, but to participate in a deep way.”

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A Passion for People

Having cultivated such a dedicated, trusted team is something Jones is extremely proud of. “I’ve always had passion for family law,” she says. “My own close relationship with my family and their influence on my upbringing ignited, for me, a desire to help other people facing challenges with their own families. I also saw the potential to build my firm from the ground up and create my own ‘work family,’ which has been one of my greatest achievements in terms of firm growth and culture.”

Jones credits her brother Ferman as the reason she’s a lawyer today. “He was an inspiration and role model for me growing up. I learned a lot from him about the connection between what we do today and how it impacts our life tomorrow. This cause-and-effect lesson from an early age inspired me to be a lawyer. The work I do for my clients today impacts their lives tomorrow and beyond,” Jones says.

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Jones, originally from Los Angeles, has called Denver home for the last 20-plus years. “I love everything Denver and Colorado have to offer, but I am most passionate about the people—my community, my staff, and my clients. Church community is very important to me, and I spend time with my family and grandchildren whenever I can.”

Jones has a daily practice that keeps these important people in her life at the top of mind. Perhaps it is part of the secret of her steady leadership and calm in the face of radical

change over the past few years. “I’m an early riser and believe in starting every morning with a non-negotiable: a morning routine with exercise and prayer. I enjoy walks around the lake at sunrise and a prayer of gratitude for my family, friends, and the Jones Law Firm team and clients.”

Forging the Future

Reflecting on her presidential year ahead, Jones observes that CBA-CLE is in a period of transition. “I think we’re still figuring out how to navigate the global pandemic and its influence on the practice of law, but I also see the intersection with CLE and many other pertinent issues of our time, like social and access to justice concerns. I’m excited to be a part of carving out what the future looks like for CBA-CLE.” 

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