

# Daily Journal

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## Criminal lawyer to become Beverly Hills bar president

By Steven Crighton  
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**R**ichard D. Kaplan is set to become president of the Beverly Hills Bar Association at its annual installation dinner Tuesday.

Kaplan, a partner at Kaplan Marino PC, has dedicated much of his practice to representing defendants accused of violent crimes. He also regularly handles white-collar cases including fraud and embezzlement.

Nearly all of his 30 years in practice have been spent as a member of the Beverly Hills bar. Kaplan noted Thursday that his appointment to the bar's presidency comes 25 years after he served as its Barristers president.

"I've been around a while," he said.

He's held various positions within the association since then, but said he only felt comfortable getting involved in a leadership position again when the association relocated its headquarters right next to his office a few years ago.

"It's funny," Kaplan said. "The selfish part is they moved into the Rolex Building — it's a beautiful building, and right next door. But it was good to know that ... it was an obligation that I could fulfill."

Marc Staenberg, the bar association's CEO, said that Kaplan was one of several attorneys to help start the Roxbury Park Legal Clinic, a community-oriented legal



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services institution launched in 1992 that's still operating.

"He's a terrific bar leader. He's smart, he's savvy, and he leads by experience, as he's shown over many years," Staenberg said.

Kaplan, who will take the reins from outgoing president and tax specialist Howard S. Fischer, said he's been proud to see efforts made by the association to engage the community. He said that's an aspect of the organization's mission that he'd like to emphasize as president.

"The Beverly Hills bar is big enough to be a force, but small enough to be inti-

mate. Within that, there's a community," Kaplan said. "In my practice, personal relationships are so important. It starts with clients; then you have judges, prosecutors, and so on. I just hope that people feel comfortable with the experience of the Beverly Hills bar. It's something you always want to make better."

In particular, Kaplan said he'd like to promote continuing legal education programs that encourage bar association members to reach out to help others, either within the bar or in the area, "to really emphasize that community feeling."

Staenberg said Kaplan wants to make networking a more organic endeavor for attorneys. "He's particularly interested in the bar as a community. He wants attorneys to not just attend programs, but to use them as an opportunity to meet one another and create friendships," Staenberg said.

Kaplan will be sworn in by Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge James N. Branco in a ceremony at the Four Seasons Los Angeles at Beverly Hills at 300 South Doheny Drive. Paul Yanover, president of the media company Fandango and a personal friend of Kaplan, will be guest speaker.

The ceremony begins at 5:30 p.m. Tickets for the event are \$315 and can be purchased either online at the association's website or by phone at 310-601-2422.