



MICHELE R. GAGNON
2021 CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Name:

Please Note: All responses will be shared with NCBA Members through the website and published via a link in the weekly newsletter.

Mandatory questions:

1. Has your firm been a NCBA Firm Member in good standing for two (2) consecutive years? My firm has been a member of the NCBA for more than two (2) constitutive years.
2. Have you attended an NCBA Event (Conference or Executive Experience) in the past two years? I have attended every NCBA conference for the past eight (8) years, with the exception of the October Executive Experience.

Optional questions:

3. In what city and state do you practice? I practice in Annapolis Maryland and my firm's main office is in Mt. Laurel, New Jersey.
4. How long have you been a creditors' rights attorney? I have been a creditors' rights attorney since 1996.
5. What is the name of the law firm member for which you work? I work for Lyons, Doughty & Veldhuis.
6. What is your current job title and duties? My current title is Associate Attorney. My duties include court appearances, calendar management, as well as handling all contested matters for the State of Maryland. I approve suits and other pleadings, and manage appearance counsel.
7. What are your two main practice areas? The firms' main practice areas are credit card collections and auto loan collections.
8. Have you served as a Committee or Task Force Chair or Co-Chair in the past three (3) years? Of which Committees or Task Forces? For the past two years I have served as Co-Chair of the Membership Committee. For the two years prior to that, I was Treasurer for the Organization and Co-Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee. In the past I also served as Chair of the State Government Affairs Forum and Education Pillar.



9. Provide a list of professional articles or presentations that you have done. Please list the date and whether the presentation was for the NCBA. My past presentations include: NCBA Debt Buyer Mock Trial; NCBA Certified Business Records Panel; NCBA How to Start/Organize a State Creditors' Bar Panel; NCBA What Your Local Judges Want you to Know Panel; Panelist for the NCBA Legal Symposium; 2017 Charles County Inns of Court FDCPA Presentation.
10. Are you involved in state advocacy through an SCBA or NCBA chapter? I am a Member of the Board of Directors for the MD/DC Creditors' Bar.
11. Have you served on a Board of Directors (or similar governing body) previously? Please describe. I am currently on the Board of Directors for the NCBA, and in the past, have served on Board from Fall 2011 to Fall 2017. I am currently on the Board of Directors for the MD/DC Creditors' Bar and am a past-president of that organization. I have also in the past served as a Board member for a Homeowners' Association.
12. Describe some of your leadership roles or describe what qualities you possess that make you a strong leader. From 2017 through 2019, I was Treasurer for the organization and a member of the NCBA Executive Committee. As such, I was involved in many high-level decisions for the organization. Previously, I served as Education Pillar, Membership Committee Chair, and State Government Affairs Forum Chair. I enjoyed all of these positions, but especially the State Government position as I felt it was an important conduit between the national and state organizations. I am on the Board of Directors for the MD/DC Creditors' Bar and am a past-president of that organization. I prefer to lead by example, and am always willing to do the hard work myself. Also, in order to have people follow, you must have a positive message.
13. Why do you want to serve on the Board of Directors for NCBA? I want to serve on the Board of Directors because I truly believe in this organization and its mission. Our strength comes from all of us working together. I also believe that I have experience in all facets of the organization that will be helpful to leadership. I have been involved with Membership, Advocacy, and Education Committees, as well as Co-Chairing the Budget and Finance Committee. I believe I can benefit the organization with my experience and institutional knowledge.
14. How will you help NCBA advance its mission statement? I will help NCBA advance its mission statement by helping to develop and implement educational programs that focus on best practices. I will help to extend these programs to the SCBAs and State Chapters. I will help to develop outreach programs, on both the National and State level, to legators and regulators informing them of our Code of Conduct and professionalism. I will help develop more programs to support our members and assist in their busy practices.



15. What motivates you to do excellent work? My strong work ethic motivates me to do excellent work. I believe if you accept a project or task, you should see it all the way through to the best of your ability. I also get a strong sense of accomplishment when successfully completing a task.
16. What is your ideal level of interaction with the other board members? My ideal level of interaction with other board members would be at least once a month.
17. What is the biggest challenge facing our industry? What do you recommend we do to overcome that challenge? The misconception about our industry and who we are is the biggest challenge we face. The public, legislators, and regulators do not understand our level of professionalism and the fact that the legal process is a level playing field, especially in these difficult times. In order to combat this, we need to get our message out in a broader and more forceful way. We need to be more proactive and less reactive. Both the national bar and the state bars need more outreach to our legislators and regulators. Once we can demonstrate our professionalism and compassion, it might turn the tide and we will be seen as an important part of the credit economy.
18. What do you recommend doing to increase participation in NCBA by younger and/or newer attorneys, or new members of NCBA? In order to increase NCBA participation by younger and newer attorneys and members, we should offer short-term and specific tasks. I believe more members would participate for short bursts, as it might fit better into busy schedules. Also, once having completed a task, it would entice members to volunteer again in the future. Additionally, the conferences might need to be tweaked to provide more free-time and/or more recreational opportunities that fit better into a balanced lifestyle in order to attract a younger audience.