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Masters of Trial Law Will Present Closings

By Erin Park

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Mix masters of trial law are set to deliver closing arguments from notable past cases during the 23rd annual Consumer Attorneys Association of Los Angeles convention in Las Vegas.

Annual attendees say "Closing Arguments by the Masters," in its third year, has become one of the most highly anticipated programs of the four-day conference.

"It's always standing room only," said President-elect Steven Glickman of Beverly Hills-based Glickman & Glickman.

Antony Stuart, immediate past president of the organization and principal of the Stuart Law Firm in West Los Angeles, agreed.

"It's the highest attended MCLE seminar probably anywhere in the world," Stuart said. "It's one room with 400 trial lawyers with rapt attention on the stage."

The three-hour program features Bruce A. Broillet of Santa Monica-based Greene, Broillet & Wheeler; Roxanne Conlin, who has her own firm in Des Moines, Iowa; Harvey R. Levine of San Diego-based Levine, Steinberg, Miller & Huver; Charles B. O'Reilly of Hobart & O'Reilly in Marina del Rey; Gary M. Paul of Santa Monica-based Paul & Janofsky; and Jerome L. Ringler of Robins, Kaplan, Miller & Ciresi in Century City.

Broillet declined to reveal which case his presentation will come from, but he did say what he thinks makes a successful closing argument.

"Each lawyer has to be true to his or her own style and not try to be somebody else," he said.

Broillet also said watching the closing



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arguments being delivered in person offers an ideal learning situation.

"The sort of interplay that occurs between a speaker and an audience is an intangible that can't come through in a book," he said. "When we try cases, we're trying them live before a jury. We're not just giving a jury a book to read."

Paul of Paul & Janofsky in Santa Monica agreed, saying the teaching aspect is why he agreed to participate.

"I love the educational experience that it gives young lawyers," he said.

Paul said he most likely would focus on a medical-malpractice case to highlight what he sees as the problem with economic damage limits. He described his approach to winning successful verdicts.

"I think the most important thing in a good closing argument is to be able to reach the jury on a level where you have believability, where you have credibility and where you're able to speak to their minds and their hearts," he said.

Jerome L. Ringler, a partner with Century City-based Robins, Kaplan, Miller & Ciresi, said he anticipates getting as much out of the session as he puts in as a presenter.

"It's exciting to have the opportunity to listen to truly gifted attorneys," Ringler said. "You're able to speak with those lawyers afterward and get their input."

And like the other presenters, Ringler said his motivation stems from a desire to share the knowledge and expertise he's gained over the years.

"It's incumbent upon trial lawyers with experience to give something back to the bar," he said.