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## This Isn't 1995: How the State Bar of Michigan Stays One Step Ahead

Bar associations aren't known to be early adopters when it comes to technology. In fact, writes Nicole Black at [Above the Law](#), many still operate as if it's 1995. (Ouch.) One notable exception, she believes, is the State Bar of Michigan. Black talks with Executive Director Janet Welch about why the bar decided to focus on cutting-edge technology for the benefit of its members, how that priority is carried out, and her three tips for other bar associations that want to take a step forward.

## ABA Launches Free Virtual Legal Advice Clinic

Recognizing the need for free online legal help for low-income individuals — and the successful track record of a model first launched in Tennessee and then adapted in Virginia — last week, the American Bar Association debuted [ABAFreeLegalAnswers.org](#). Pro bono lawyers in eight states (and eventually nationwide, the ABA hopes) will answer civil legal questions for those who are found to be income-eligible. What law firms and corporations are on the clinic's long list of supporters? [ABA Journal](#) has all the details.

## Lawyer in Recovery Says Law Firms Don't Do Enough, Early Enough

When a lawyer in a big law firm has an alcohol or substance abuse problem, a mental illness, or other impairment, the response by those who work with him or her is often the same: 1) ignore the problem, 2) ignore the problem some more, and 3) refer the lawyer to the lawyer assistance program, Alcoholics Anonymous, or other such organization once the problem has risen to the level of an emergency. That's according to Brian Cuban, a lawyer and a recovering alcoholic and addict who says he's seen far too many careers ruined — and lives ended — because "silence does not empower recovery." Bloomberg Law's [Big Law Business](#) talks with Cuban about what else law firms can and should do to help.

## Hennepin County Bar Association Names Susie Brown as Executive Director

In recent years, many bar associations no longer view a law degree as a necessity or even a particularly strong preference when seeking a new executive director. Instead, how about significant experience in nonprofit management? That's what Susie Brown brings to her new role as executive director of the Hennepin County Bar Association. [Minnesota Lawyer](#) offers a glimpse of Brown's impressive background and how she developed the knowledge that could help her and the bar succeed.

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