

Wanted: Expanded Services

STATE BAR MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS

BY TAYLOR TASLER

Every three years, the State Bar of Arizona asks its members how satisfied they are with their Bar membership and their profession. The goal of the survey is to hear directly from Arizona’s lawyers and judges about their views of the profession, the economic future, and the Bar’s products and services. A link to an online questionnaire was sent in September 2023 to all 25,548 members, and nearly 11 percent responded. (Legal Paraprofessionals and Over Age 70 members had a base response of fewer than 30, and those results are included for informational purposes only.) Research USA conducted the survey and says the results are projectable within a range of plus or minus two percent.

Member Satisfaction

Overall, most members say they are satisfied with their State Bar membership. **Table 1** shows that 75.9 percent of respondents report being “very satisfied” or “generally satisfied” with their membership in the Bar. That number is down slightly from 2020’s

survey, where 77.2 percent of members checked the box. It’s worth noting that the 2020 survey had a significantly higher number of respondents.

So which members report that they are the most satisfied? Nearly 90 percent of judicial members report being very or gener-

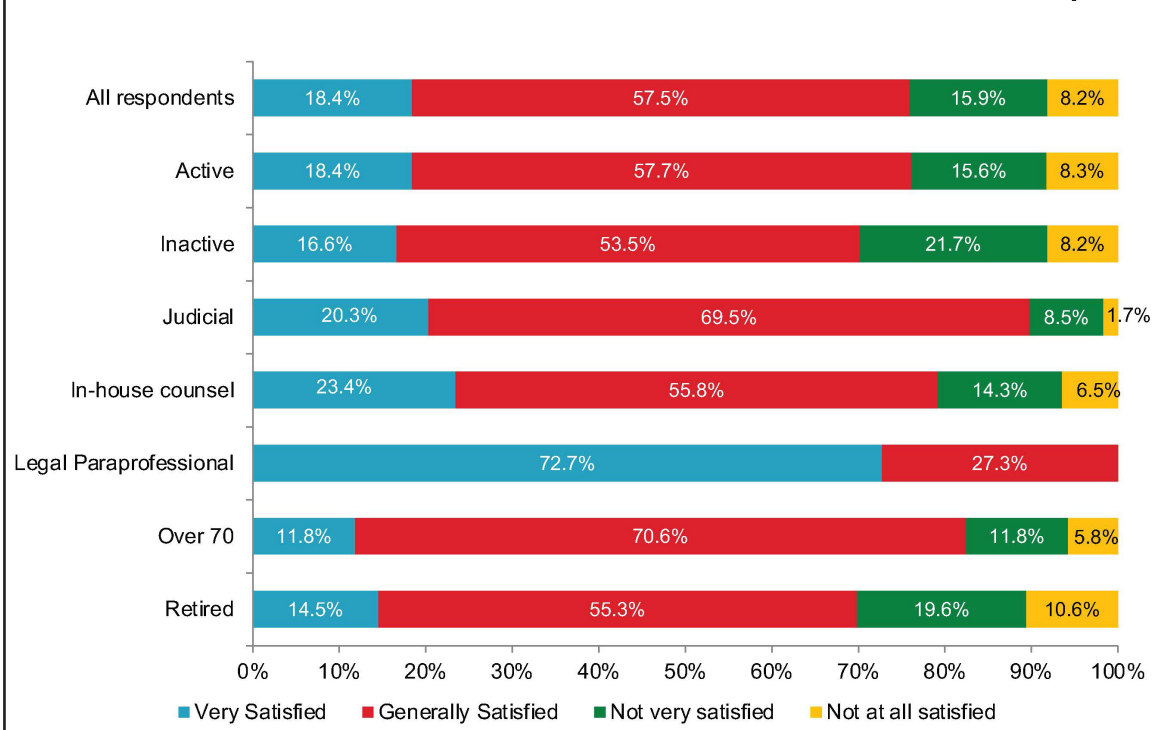
ally satisfied with their membership. In-house counsel had the second-highest level of satisfaction at 76.1 percent. The same satisfaction responses were given by 76.1 percent of active members and 70.1 percent of inactive members.

Across all respondents, 24.1 percent say they were not very or not at all satisfied with their membership. The top reasons behind their discontent are the price of their bar dues, a lack of value of member benefits for the price, the cost of CLEs, and a lack of support for small law firms.

Members also were asked about their experience when contacting the State Bar and if they were satisfied with the response they received. **Table 2** shows that 89.7 percent of respondents report they were very or generally satisfied with

TABLE 1

Overall Level of Satisfaction with State Bar of Arizona Membership



how promptly the Bar got back to them, and 86.5 percent were very or generally satisfied with the SBA's response. Both of those numbers are slightly down compared to 2020. Of those who contacted the Bar within the past 12 months, nearly 74 percent reached out by phone, while 53.4 percent used email.

Member Benefits

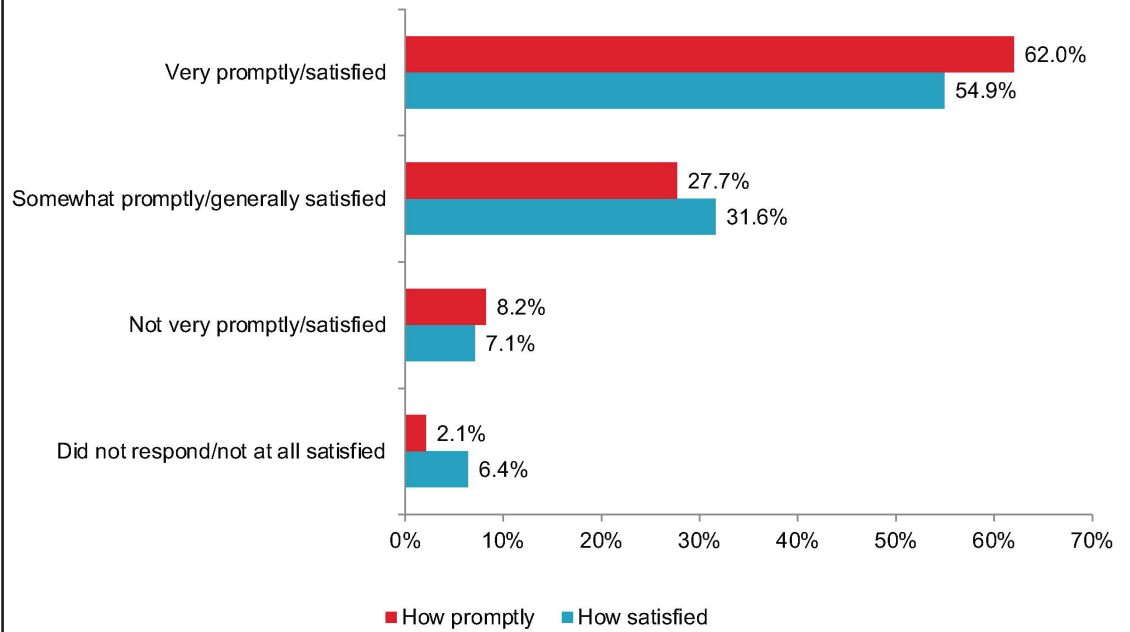
Active members were asked to rate the value of 24 member benefits. As seen in **Table 3**, the benefits members found very or somewhat valuable by the largest percentages were azbar.org (79.6 percent), AZCLE programs (76.7 percent), ARIZONA ATTORNEY MAGAZINE (72.5 percent), the Ethics Helpline (71.6 percent) and AZCLE publications (62.6 percent). Compared to the 2020 survey, satisfaction among each of those benefits has declined. Responses to the same question by gender are shown in **Table 4**.

Not surprisingly, active members who are satisfied with their membership were happier with the benefits offered by the Bar. A significantly higher percentage of Bar members identifying as female rated the benefits as very or somewhat valuable compared to members identifying as male.

When it comes to opportunities delivered very or somewhat well by the Bar, members continue to be satisfied. Opportunities offered include networking, service

TABLE 2

How Promptly Did the SBA Respond to Your Requests/ How Satisfied Were You with the Response from the SBA



Based on 32.2% of members who contacted the SBA in the last 12 months.

opportunities, professional development and opportunities to improve the law, as seen in **Table 5**. Members of less than five years were more likely to rate these opportunities as very or somewhat important to

them compared to the rest of the membership. According to respondents, the State Bar is one of the top providers members turn to for continuing legal education, with 56.6

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TABLE 3

Leading Member Benefits Rated "Very" or "Somewhat Valuable"

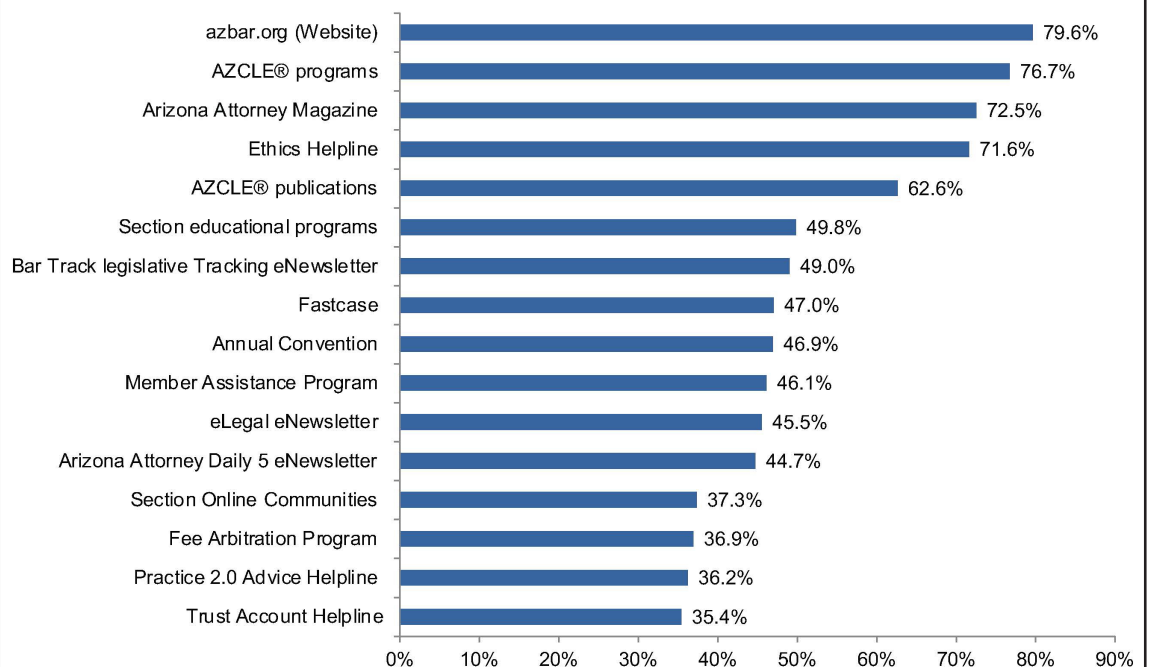


TABLE 4

Member Benefits Rated “Very” or “Somewhat Valuable”	Females	Males
Azbar.org	86.3%	78.9%
Ethics Helpline	81.0%	66.8%
Arizona Attorney Magazine	78.5%	71.4%
Section educational programs	59.6%	46.1%
Bar Track legislative Tracking eNewsletter	56.6%	45.2%
Annual Convention	56.5%	43.9%
eLegal eNewsletter	55.8%	41.7%
Arizona Attorney Daily 5 eNewsletter	54.1%	41.6%
Member Assistance Program	53.4%	43.6%
Practice 2.0 Advice Helpline	45.6%	31.4%
Section Online Communities	45.3%	34.8%
Practice 2.0 Resources	44.0%	31.9%
Online Career Center	42.0%	27.8%

percent using the Bar’s courses. As seen in **Table 6**, when members were asked why they choose to attend a Bar CLE over a program offered by another provider, the leading reason is the relevance to content/topic (74 percent). Other reasons for choosing the Bar were method of delivery, automatic tracking, cost, presumption of compliance with MCLE rules, date and time of the program, and location. Members also indicated that there are areas the Bar can improve by offering topics on ethics, government law,

TABLE 5

Opportunities Offered	“Somewhat Important”	“Somewhat Well”
Networking	56.8%	66.6%
Service opportunities to benefit the community, the legal system, the profession	64.6%	66.5%
Opportunities to participate in the improvement of the law	64.8%	65.5%
Professional development and resources	74.0%	73.3%

criminal law, and technology issues, specifically artificial intelligence.

Just 5.4 percent of respondents report that they reached out to the Bar for Practice 2.0 practice management advice in the last 12 months, but twice that number—10.4 percent—report that they accessed practice management resources on the Bar’s website. Among the offerings, the highest-rated—earning a 4.2 out of 5—was “review of a fee agreement,” as shown in **Table 7**.

Another benefit that a small number of members report they are using is the Ethics Hotline. Only 15.7 percent of members overall say that they had called the Hotline in the last 12 months, though that number rises to more than 20 percent for those in practice 5-14 years—and it could have made an important difference to the hundreds of lawyers who called while facing an ethical quandary.

As in the past, responses suggest that members could benefit from increased communication about the breadth of services offered. Over 40 percent of members said

they were unaware of the online subpoena tool, *eLegal Tech* eNewsletter, and the *eLegal Solo* eNewsletter.

Ideally, members would like to see the Bar add or expand the current resources available to them, such as free or low-cost CLEs, lower bar dues, health/group life insurance, mental/counseling services, and expanded access to the legal research tool Fastcase.

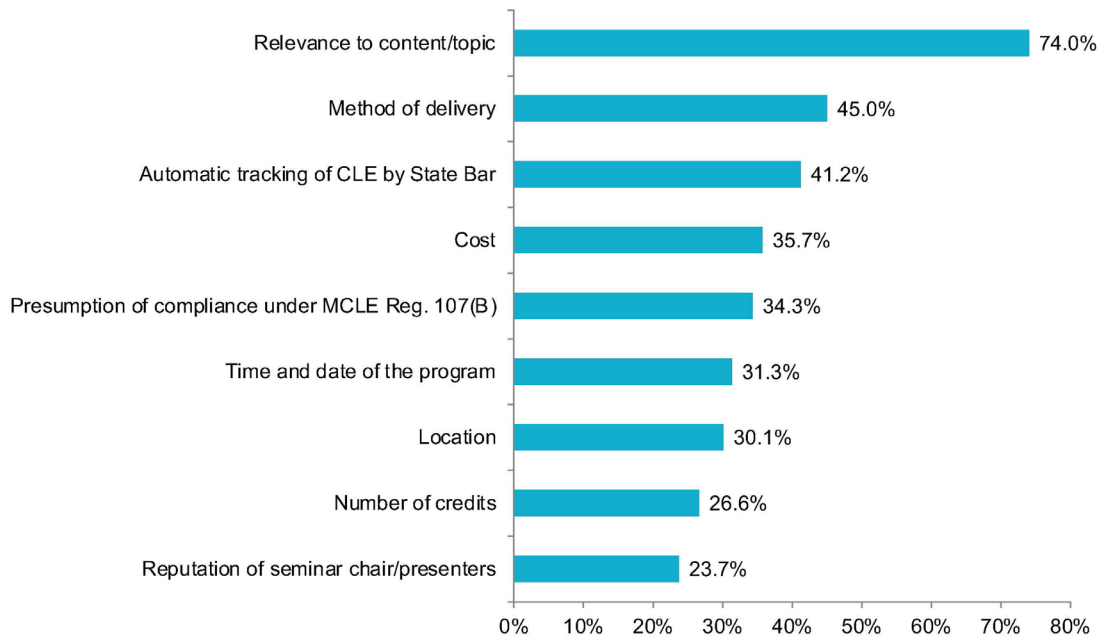
Career Satisfaction and Challenges

Active members were asked to rate how content they are in their career. As seen in **Table 8**, nearly 87 percent report being satisfied with being an attorney. Respondents 70 and older reported the highest levels of career satisfaction at almost 98 percent, while 85.5 percent of lawyers younger than 40 said they are happy with their career choice. The 13.3 percent of active members who say they are not content with their career cite the adversarial nature of the job, high stress levels, work/life imbalance, burnout, and inability to make enough money to pay their student loans. The challenges listed by attorneys in 2023 mirror those noted in the 2020 member survey.

Active members were asked to describe their career plans over the next three years. Nearly half of respondents (49.5 percent) report they

TABLE 6

Leading Reasons for Choosing to Attend SBA AZCLE®



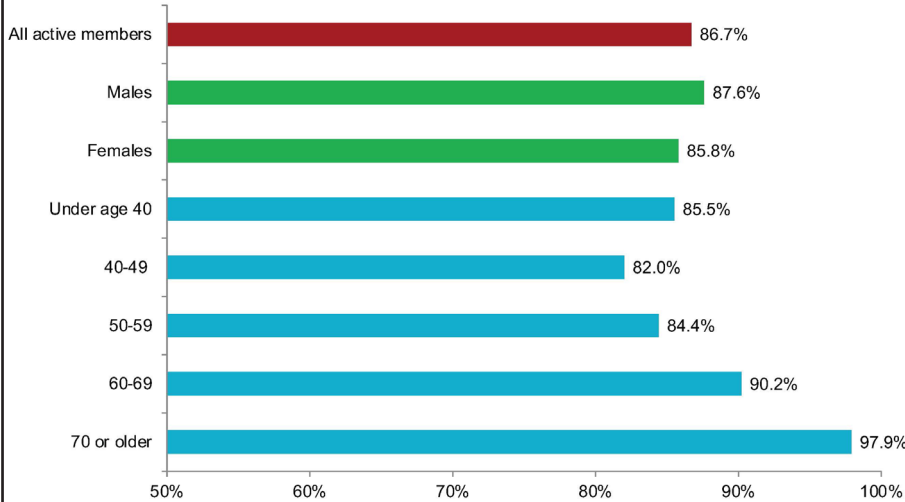
don't plan on changing careers anytime soon. 17.1 percent plan to retire, and 10.1 percent plan to change from full-time to part-time. And 9.2 percent of respondents indicate they plan to leave the practice of law, a slight increase from the 8.7 percent reported in 2020.

TABLE 7

Service/product provided	Average rating
Review of fee agreement	4.2
Leaving a firm	4.2
Forms or sample fee agreements	4.2
Trust account management and advice	4.1
Winding down or closing a practice	4.0
Eye on Ethics column in Arizona Attorney magazine	4.0
Law office/practice management advice	3.9
Starting a practice	3.8
Let's Practice column in Arizona Attorney magazine	3.8
Information about technology	3.5
Mentorship	3.4

TABLE 8

Percentage of Active Members Who Are Satisfied with Their Career as an Attorney



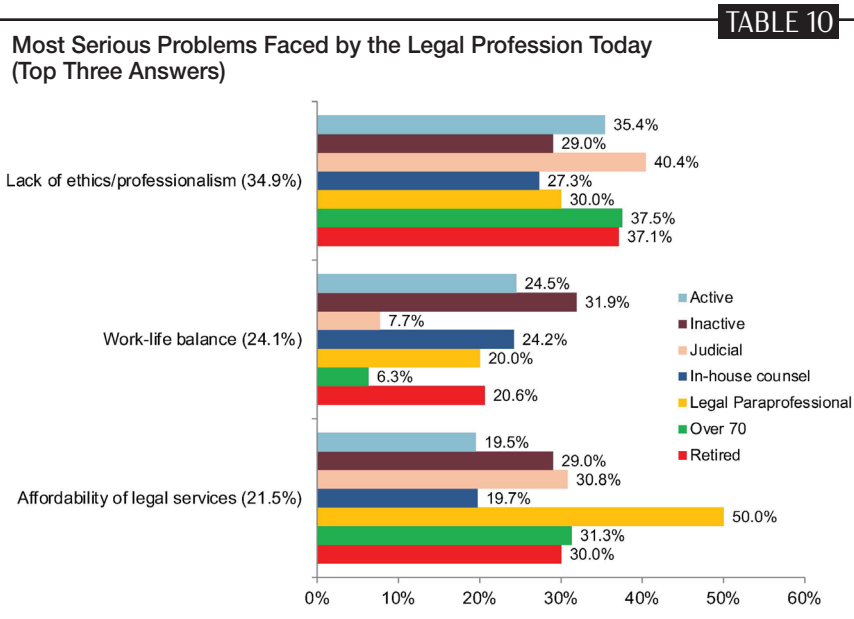
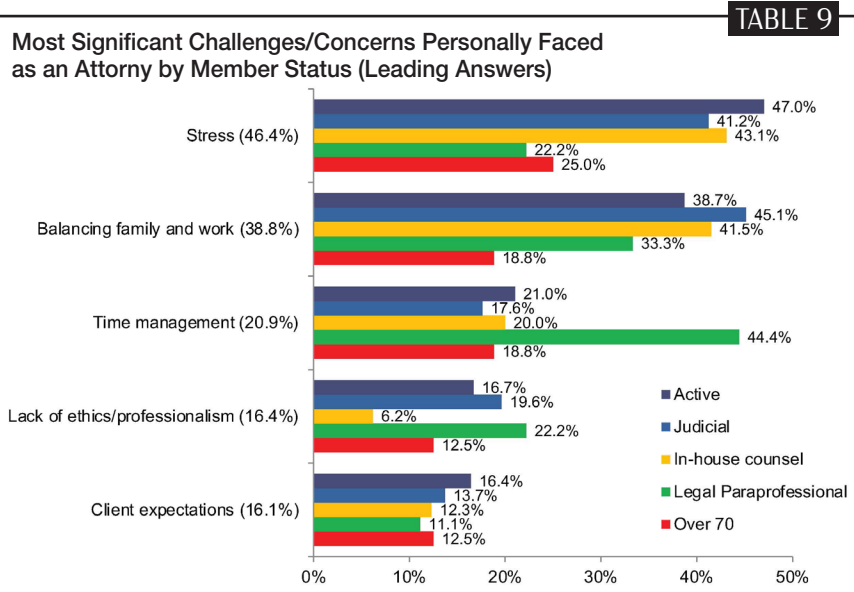
When asked to identify the three most significant barriers facing them, stress was the leading challenge (46.4 percent), along with balancing work and family (38.8 percent) and time management (20.9 percent), as seen in **Table 9**. Bar members of less than five years note that paying their student loans is a significant challenge/concern for them.

Asked what they believe to be the three most serious problems facing the legal profession, respondents name a lack of ethics/professionalism as number one (34.9 percent), as they did three years ago (32.6 percent). The next two leading challenges were work-life balance and affordability of legal

services, as seen in Table 10.

Members were asked what topics would help them thrive and function, and a majority of respondents (Table 11) indicate stress reduction (50.9 percent), how to use technology in their practice (49.3 percent), and balancing work and life (47.4 percent). 36.7 percent of members indicate they would like to see more mental health education from the Bar.

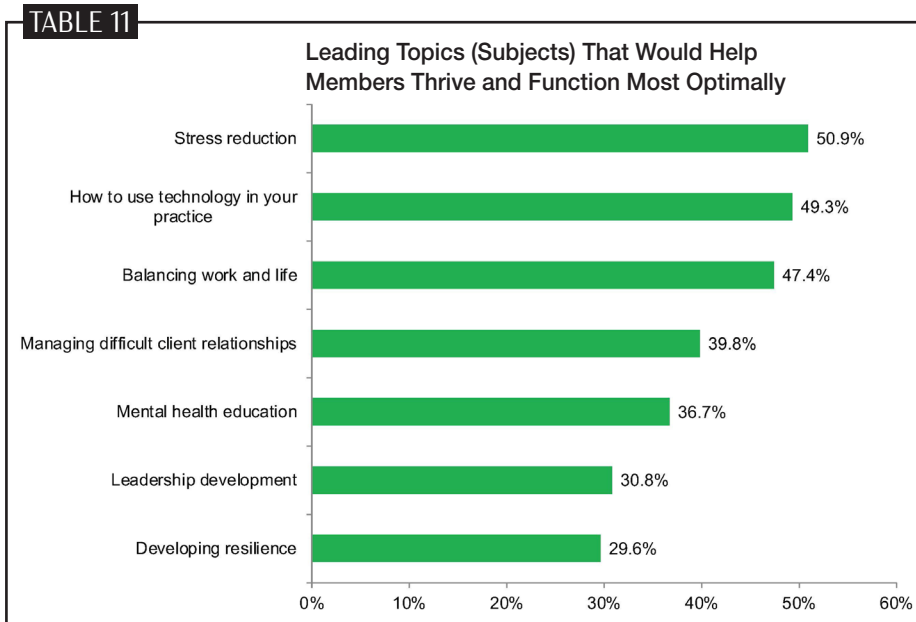
Relatedly, results show that a majority of members are not seeking out the Bar wellness programs that currently exist. Asked if they had participated in the SBA’s wellness and well-being programs or CLEs, 24 percent said they had, which is a significant jump from three years ago (14 percent), but still low. More women report taking advantage of the resources offered to them compared to men. Among those who say they hadn’t participated



in the programs, 38.8 percent say they were unaware they existed. Nearly 31 percent say they had no interest in the programs, and 20.8 percent say the topics aren’t relevant. A similar trend appeared in 2020.

Convention

Regarding the State Bar’s annual convention, active members were asked how many of the last three they have attended. One out of four respondents said they had attended one or more conventions, with women being more likely to attend than men (29 percent compared to 22.4 percent). When asked why they didn’t attend, 38.4 percent said the registration fee exceeded their budget, they didn’t need CLE credit (37.6 percent), and the seminar topics were not relevant to their practice (30.9 percent).



Conclusion

Members’ responses make it clear that most of them are satisfied with their membership, but there is room for improvement. Most of the issues facing the legal community, such as stress, remain the same three years later, demonstrating the continued need for resources and support.

The data reported here, along with the detailed survey data, will be reviewed by Bar leadership and those who manage programs and services to see how they can better address member concerns and increase awareness of existing programs. As always, the goals are to fill in the gaps where the current resources fall short and ensure members feel supported by their Bar.