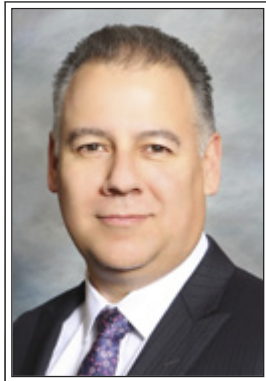


## New CSCHS Board Member Jorge E. Navarrete

BY KATE GALSTON\*

**J**ORGE E. NAVARRETE is the 27th court administrator and clerk of the California Supreme Court and the state's first Latino to serve in this role. He is also the newest member of the California Supreme Court Historical Society Board of Directors.



A native of Guadalajara, Mexico, Jorge immigrated to the United States in 1987 to pursue his dream of becoming a U.S. military pilot. He enlisted in the U.S. Army, served in Operation Desert Storm, and received three promotions during his service before his honorable discharge in 1993.

After leaving the Army, Jorge, who had been interested in the law even before he decided to become a pilot, sought an opportunity to work in the field. He took a position as a security officer and later supervisor at the firm that provided security services to the California Supreme Court and Court of Appeal in San Francisco.

In 1996, Jorge joined the Supreme Court as an office assistant in the Court's file room. From the start, Jorge was interested in court rules and practices and found the work fascinating. He was promoted through five more job classifications before being named as court administrator and clerk on October 1, 2016, succeeding Frank A. McGuire. His new job had been a "dream" from his early days at the Court but it never crossed his mind that he would someday hold this position.

Jorge has seen many changes in the Court's operation during his 20-year tenure. In particular, advances in technology — including email, public Internet access to court information and procedures,

and the electronic case management system — have altered the way that the Court conducts its business. Jorge believes that technology has improved both the Court's internal operations and the public's access to the Court.

However, he notes that there are still rooms filled with folders of record documents — or "doghouses," as they are known in Supreme Court parlance — and that likely will not change any time soon although the Court is in the process of migrating to an electronic filing system.

As court administrator and clerk, Jorge's days are busy and varied. He navigates hundreds of emails each day and handles issues that are as wide-ranging as lights out within the building, important budget decisions, proposed rule changes, personnel problems, and case information. But, "all it takes is one case, one issue, one filing, to change the way a day is going," he said.

He enjoys coming to the Court each day because the work is exciting and makes a real difference to the people of California. He particularly relishes the opportunities to interact with the public, including students, and to provide information about the role of the Court and demystify the Court's process.

Jorge is quite interested in the Society's efforts to preserve and promote the history of the state's highest court and believes that we are now living in a particularly interesting time for the Court. For example, recent appointments have created a female majority, including justices from widely varying personal backgrounds. When passing into the courtroom, Jorge often notes that this is a completely different Court from the one depicted in the old portraits that line the halls.

And, as the first Latino in his job, Jorge is also making history.

In his off-hours, Jorge enjoys spending time with his family and friends, playing tennis, and taking daytrips around Northern California. And every now and then he has a chance to fly a plane again. ★

\* Kate Galston is an appellate lawyer in Los Angeles and a board member of the California Supreme Court Historical Society.

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