

# RAISING THE BAR

MOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

2007, ISSUE 5



# HIGHLIGHTS JUDICIAL RECEPTION 1 PRESIDENT'S COLUMN 2 WINE TASTING 3 COMMITTEE AND FORUM H IGHTS 4 A DELEGATE'S DIARY 6-7 CALENDAR OF EVENTS 7 SUSTAINING MEMBERS 8



WBA President Tracy Durkin welcomes the crowd with panelists John Nields, Hon. Delissa Ridgway and Dean Frederick Lawrence (from left to right) looking on.



Judges Delissa Ridgway, Vanessa Ruiz (NAWJ Immediate Past President) and Pauline Newman enjoy a moment.

### HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2007 JUDICIAL RECEPTION

On February 21, the WBA and the National Association of Women Judges, continued in a tradition begun almost 60 years ago in hosting the 2007 Judicial Reception. This year's event included a panel discussion on Judicial Independence featuring the Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema, United States District Court Judge for the Eastern District of Virginia, Dean Frederick M. Lawrence of the George Washington University Law School, and John W. Nields, an attorney at Howrey LLP and member of the Council for Court Excellence. The panel was moderated by the Honorable Delissa A. Ridgway, a judge on the U.S. Court of International Trade and past president of the WBA. The panel discussion was held at the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit with a reception at the historic Dolley Madison House. The Honorable Pauline Newman of the Federal Circuit made opening remarks.

The panelists each brought a unique perspective on the impact of the public debate over the importance and meaning of judicial independence. Dean Lawrence

discussed the origins of judicial review and judicial independence, quoting from Alexander Hamilton's Federalist Papers to explain how these concepts were conceived in the founding of our nation. Judge Brinkema focused on the need for judicial independence, not only in reviewing legislative action but also in reviewing enactments of the executive branch. Mr. Nields talked about his work on the Council for Court Excellence and his studies comparing the selection process for District of Columbia judges compared to the processes in various other states and the effect of those processes on judicial independence. The panel also discussed the emerging role of modern media in scrutinizing judges' decisions and the duty of attorneys to defend the process of judicial review in media forums where judges cannot speak publicly to defend their decisions. The vibrant discussion continued following the panelists' presentations with questions and comments from the audience.

The WBA would like to extend its warmest gratitude to the many sponsors and guests of the judiciary and the bar without which this wonderful event would not have been possible. The WBA also thanks the Judicial Reception co-chairs Hon. Linda Horner, Hon. Janet James Mahon and Vicki Nielsen for their hard work coordinating this wonderful event.

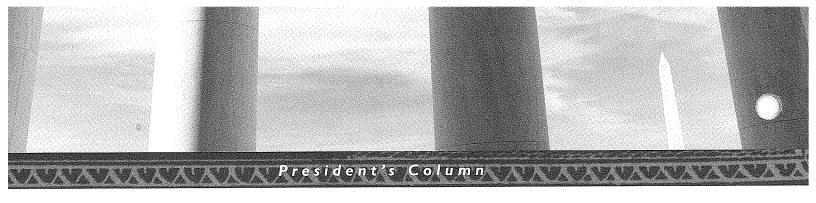
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# THE WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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I grew up in a house with a sign over the kitchen telephone that read "Career Then Marriage." My Mom put it there to send my two sisters and me a message. A husband and a family could wait, but a career should not. My Mom was married in her early twenties and then had children shortly thereafter. She did not have enough "single" time to have a career. So what my Mom wanted more than anything for her daughters was what she perceived as a life with more choices than she

had - a life that was defined by a career.

Just this past month, I was sent two different articles exploring the reasons why women are leaving large law firms. One was titled "We're Outa Here: Why Women are Leaving Big Firms," which appeared in the February issue of the California Lawyer magazine. The other was titled "Women and Minorities: Why do they Leave Big Firms?", which appeared in the February issue of the Chicago Lawyer. No longer are we asking, "why are women leaving the practice of law?", as we did just a few years ago. The focus of today's public debate is "why are women leaving large firms?"

In the past women had to choose to either stay at a firm to attain high-level success, or they had to give up that aspiration. Today, young women have more options. From changing work environments, to the ability to work with flexibility thanks to technology, there are a variety of ways to have robust legal careers and a personal life. It is positive to see women have the courage and support to explore diverse options. At the same time, it is discouraging to think that because of this exodus, the number of women who rise to the highest levels of management in large law firms is not likely to see significant growth any time soon. As a result, the policies at large law firms that drive women to alternative career options are not likely to change soon either.

The result is a widening gap between women lawyers from the "Baby-Boomer" era and women lawyers from the two most recent generations. We baby-boomers are deeply proud that we seemingly have achieved equal treatment with men in law firms. Not all of us had the sign over the telephone, but we were encouraged in one way or another by our parents, and mostly by our mothers, to be independent and self-sufficient. We are in essence, women who achieved what our mothers felt they could not.

Many women in the two most recent generations of attorneys have seen the results of baby-boomer "careers" and are not interested in making the same choices and sacrifices. Whether or not they have children, these women are increasingly defining themselves not by their career alone, but by who they are and what they give back to society. That is why so many of these women are rejecting the traditional law firm experience for something else that allows them more flexibility and time to participate in life outside the office.

So how do we bridge this gap? By understanding these differences and where they stem from and then by coming together to create a powerful voice that can influence law firm leaders to create policies that are more flexible and inclusive, where all women can be successful in the profession of law with that success defined for individual women on their own terms.

Tracy-Gene G. Durkin
WBA President



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## THE WBA FOUNDATION HOSTS AN EVENING OF WINES FROM DOWN UNDER

The Women's Bar Association Foundation hosted its annual wine tasting and silent auction the evening of January 25, at the offices of White & Case LLP. This year's theme,

"Kangaroos & Kiwis: Wines from Down Under" set the tone for the evening, as close to 100 attendees explored the wines of Australia and New Zealand. Event Co-Chairs Susan Kovarovics and Narda Newby organized a new, interactive format for this year's event that allowed for more mingling and networking throughout the evening.

The evening began with a brief discussion about the wines offered for tasting, led by Suzanne McGrath of The Curious Grape wine shop. Ms. McGrath provided background on each of the wines, as well as suggestions for particular foods that could be tastily paired with the wines. After this discussion, guests moved at their own pace among three wine tasting stations, each offering up to four wines for tasting and cheeses, olive oil, fruit, chocolate, and other foods that complemented each wine.

Guests had the opportunity to order any of the wines tasted that evening and The Curious Grape generously offered to donate 15% of the evening's purchases to the WBA Foundation. Guests also spent the evening perusing and bidding on a dazzling array of silent auc-



The crowd enjoys the tastings!



Everyone having a great time at the WBAF Wine Tasting.

tion items, including stunning jewelry, luxurious spa packages, and fabulous weekend get-aways. All proceeds from the wine tasting and silent auction will benefit WBA Foundation grant recipients-organizations that provide support, education, and legal services to disadvantaged and low-income women and families in the Washington, DC community. Overall, the evening was a great success-enjoyable and an excellent fundraiser for the Foundation.

### WBA Women Law Firm Leaders Group

On November 2, the WBA held the first of a series of monthly breakfast meetings for DC women law firm leaders to come together and share best practices for managing and leading their firms. Approximately 25 DC law firms that have women in the role of managing partner, practice group chair, or another significant leadership position within the firm are represented at these meetings. The group convenes to discuss a host of critical issues that impact their leadership roles within their respective firms, and law firms in general. Topics of discussion have included strategies for recruiting, retaining and advancing women and minority lawyers; mentoring women lawyers to partnership; and creative approaches for promoting work-life balance. The group's next session will address how to support and encourage women lawyers to pursue the partnership path within their law firms. For more information, please contact Tracy Durkin, WBA President at tdurkin@skgf.com.

# THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF INDEPENDENT PRO BONO WORK

On January 11, the Lawyers at Home Forum held a brown bag lunch on "The Nuts and Bolts of Independent Pro Bono Work." As attendees enjoyed the lunch generously provided by Dickstein Shapiro LLP, they learned of short and long term volunteer opportunities available through the pro bono offices in DC, Maryland, and Virginia. Panelists Arlene Beckerman, Director of Pro Bono Activities of the Fairfax Bar Pro Bono Program; Sharon E. Goldsmith, Executive Director of the Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland; and Maureen Thornton-Syracuse, Director of the DC Bar Pro Bono Program each outlined the wide range of resources available to those taking on pro bono work independently including training, research materials, and malpractice insurance. The panelists also addressed ways to meet the particular challenges facing independent legal volunteers.

### Designer Genes-Medicine Personalized for All of Us

The WBA Health Law, Intellectual Property, and Government Lawyers Forums are pleased to present a breakfast entitled "Designer Genes—Medicine Personalized for All of Us." The speakers will address the cutting-edge legal and medical issues raised by this timely and provocative topic.

Personalized medicine, also known as "pharmacogenomics," is the application of genomic data to better determine a patient's predisposition to a particular disease or condition and target delivery of medical interventions. For example, a genetic test can determine which women have certain mutations in the BRCAI gene and thus have a higher risk of developing breast or ovarian cancer. Among other current uses, personalized medicine helps some women with breast cancer avoid chemotherapy and find therapies that will specifically benefit them. Personalized medicine also offers the possibility of improved health outcomes and has the potential to make healthcare more cost-effective.

Several legal and policy issues have a direct impact on personalized medicine's pathway to success, such as healthcare payer and physician incentives, intellectual property related to personal medicine, medical records privacy, and clinical trial ethics. Our speakers will address such issues, emphasizing that their resolution will shape whether the potential of personalized medicine to prevent, diagnose and manage disease can become a mainstream reality.

The Breakfast Program features a stellar panel of authorities from each sector:

MODERATOR: Elizabeth Carder-Thompson, Partner, Reed Smith

### Speakers:

JANET WOODCOCK, M.D., Deputy Commissioner of Operations and Chief Operating Officer, U.S. Food and Drug Administration

JOANNE ZUJEWSKI, M.D., Director of Breast Cancer Research, National Cancer Institute

CLAUDINE ISAACS, M.D., Professor of Medicine and Oncology, Lombardi Cancer Center, Georgetown University

DORA HUGHES, M.D., M. P. H., Legislative Assistant to U.S. Senator Barack Obama (D-IL) (*Invited*)

PATRICK TERRY, Co-Founder and Secretary, Personalized Medicine Coalition; Co-Founder and Director of Consumer Advocacy, Genomic Health, Inc.

Where: Hotel Monaco, 700 F Street NW, Washington, DC 20002

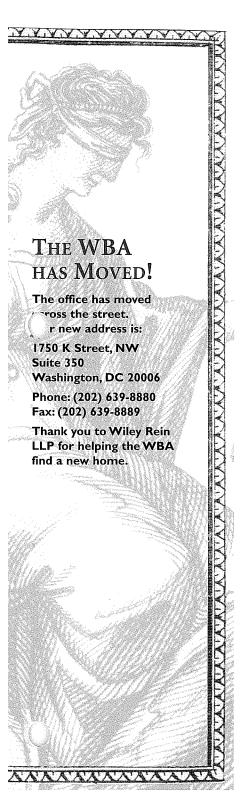
When: March 21, 2007, 8 - 10 am

WBA member ticket - \$35; Non-member ticket - \$45;

Student ticket - \$15

Sponsorships available.

To register for this event, go to www.wbadc.org and click on Calendar of Events.



### MEMBER GET-A-MEMBER CAMPAIGN!

The Women's Bar Association is in its 90th year! How can we keep the WBA strong and vibrant for another 90 years? The key is in our members, YOU! We're introducing a new membership campaign, Member Get-A-Member, and we're looking for every one of our members to recruit at least one new member each, doubling our reach, our capabilities, and our fun!

Every new member who joins between January 1 and March 31, as well as the member who referred them, will be entered into a drawing for some fantastic prizes! We're also planning an evening reception for April that will honor our new members; we know you'll want to join us for that.

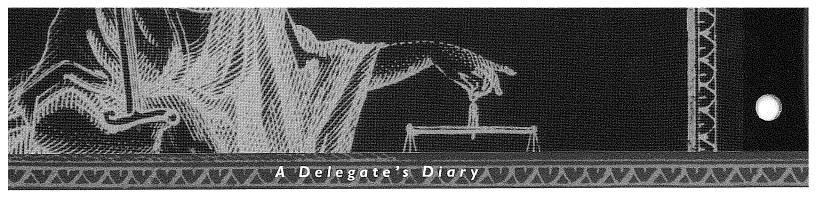
Why join the WBA? All of our members can take advantage of our networking and educational opportunities, including the Triennial Judicial Reception; recognition events like Stars of the Bar and the Annual Awards Dinner; and program offerings from our Forums and Committees. Every member of WBA has their own reasons for joining — don't forget about the camaraderie, friendship and activities. Contact the WBA office at (202) 639-8880 or admin@wbadc.org and we will be happy to mail out membership materials to help you in your recruiting efforts. Thank you for helping support the WBA's mission!

# WBA INITIATIVE ANNOUNCES LAW STUDENT PROJECT

Building on the exchange started last spring that inspired the WBA Initiative on the Advancement and Retention of Women's groundbreaking report, "Creating Pathways to Success," the WBA Initiative recently created the Law Student Project. The Law Student Project will explore what steps law students and law schools can take to help ensure that women lawyers have every opportunity to access meaningful long-term leadership roles in the legal industry.

The inaugural event for the Law Student Project, "Claiming Your Success: Preparing Women Law Students for the Recruiting Process," will be held on March 29, from 5:00–7:30 pm at Howrey LLP. This event will bring law students from the seven area law schools together in an exchange with experts on women lawyers, law firm recruiting partners, and law school professionals. The event will take an in-depth look at how women law students can navigate the recruitment process to maximize their long-term success and impact as lawyers.

Joan C.Williams, Distinguished Professor of Law and Director of the Project for Attorney Retention, Hastings College of the Law, together with Deborah Epstein Henry, President and Founder, Flex-Time Lawyers, LLC, will kick-off the discussion by examining factors at play for women finding success in law practice. Then, a panel of prominent law firm recruiting partners will discuss the hiring processes at DC firms, core selection criteria for new hires, and ways women law students can stand out during the recruiting and summer associate processes. Finally, law school career services professionals will outline the questions frequently asked by women law students and provide advice for women navigating the law school recruitment process. A networking reception will follow the panel discussions. For more information on the Law Student Project or its inaugural event, please contact Linda Chanow at chanow@shannonandmanch.com.



### WELCOME NEW WBA Members Katherine Brewer IIII Cohen Nancy Combs Mariene Dortch Julianne Dymowski Linda Estrada Callista Callista Dara Freling Lauren Gilius Megan Glasheen Susan Goldhar Meagan Guerton Piper Hendricks Elaine Ho Cheryl Hyder Vera Katz Leslie Kiernan Azy Kokabi Ann Landis eigh Lindquist Kathleen MacPherson Olga Madruga-Forti Mitchelle Mittehtell Nia Monroe Rebeces Neusdiniez Dana Pagan loyce Peters Susan Poster Natalie Roisman Avery Roselle Paula Shapiro Paimela Silberstein Christy Tinnes Karen Tinsky Sarah Toomey Teresa Trissell Michele Voelgroots Leigh Warren Leslie Wheelock



Heather L. Hodges

### **DELEGATE'S DIARY**

Over the weekend of February 8-10, I had the honor of serving as a Bar Association of the District of Columbia (BADC)/WBA Delegate to the national assembly of the Young Lawyers Division (YLD) of the American Bar Association (ABA). The Assembly met as a part of the Annual Mid-Year Meetings of the ABA in Miami, Florida and I joined a delegation of young lawyers from the District of Columbia in Miami for

a fascinating weekend of panels, town hall meetings, and social events.

**Friday-9:30** am: The weather in Miami is beautiful and sunny—a nice change from frigid DC! Upon checking into the Hyatt Regency, the first person I see is none other than former Attorney General Janet Reno. As I look around, I notice name tags identifying federal judges and other prominent members of the bar. I am thrilled to be in their company and rush through registration so I can make it over to the InterContinental Hotel where the YLD is holding its meetings.

Friday-10:15 am: The Young Lawyers Division is the largest section of the ABA and is comprised of over than 144,000 members with nearly 300 affiliated state and local young lawyers associations, such as the Young Lawyers Section of the BADC. This makes the YLD the single largest section of the ABA and, as an important constituency of the ABA leadership, its members play an influential role in defining the mission and policies of the ABA. So it was fitting that that first panel I attended was, "The Young Lawyer Perspective on the Appropriate Role of the Bar Association." The panel, which included YLD leaders, debated the pertinent issue of whether the ABA should continue to serve as a policy advocate on a broad range of sometimes controversial and divisive issues or whether it should more narrowly focus on its role as a professional organization. I found the debate to be incredibly thought-provoking as proponents of the resolution argued that the controversial positions that the ABA has taken on such hot-button issues as abortion has led to a direct drop in membership, while opponents of the resolution argued that our roles as "lawyerstatesmen" required the ABA to take public positions on important issues to provide expertise and guidance to courts, legislators and policy-makers.

Friday-11:30 am: The next panel was a helpful one called "Bar Service and the Complete Lawyer" and from the panelists we learned all about the hundreds of ways it was possible to become involved in the ABA and other bar associations. The hottest tip? The ABA makes available to its members what is informally known as the "Redbook," a directory of all of the individuals who hold leadership positions in the ABA. It is searchable by Committee, Section and name. There are literally hundreds of ways young lawyers can get involved in the ABA and some of these involve funded positions and fellowships. Full disclosure: It was through serving as a Committee member with the WBA that I had the opportunity to travel to Miami as a YLD Delegate! For more information about how to become involved in WBA or ABA activities, visit www.wbadc.org and www.abanet.org/yld/appointments/home.html.

Continued from page 6

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Wednesday, March 21, 2007 8:00 to 10:00 am Health Law Forum, IP Law Forum, Government Attorney's Forum Designer Genes: Personalized Medicine for All of Us Hotel Monaco 700 F Street, NW WBA Members: \$35; Non-members: \$45; Students: \$15

Tuesday, May 1, 2007
12:00 to 2:00 pm
Career Development Committee
Negotiating Work-Life Balance
White & Case LLP
701 | 13th Street, NW

). Members: \$20; Non-members: \$50; Students: \$15

Wednesday, May 16, 2007 6:00 to 9:00 pm Women's Bar Association 90th Annual Awards Dinner National Building Museum 401 F Street, NW

To Register for any event, visit www.wbadc.org and click on Calendar of Events.

**Friday–Lunch:** Our luncheon featured a presentation, "After the JD: What Every Young Lawyer and Senior Partner Should Know About the Changing Trends in Legal Careers," which included the surprising data from a longitudinal study of group of young lawyers (all who entered practice in 2000) conducted by the American Bar Foundation. It was interesting to learn that even at this early point in their careers, the study showed women were earning significantly less than their male counterparts. It was a difference that the study found was not explained by practice setting alone noting, "In the largest law offices (251+), there is a \$15,000 gap in men's and women's salaries." The panelists included such prominent DC women attorneys as WBA member **Marna S.Tucker**, Senior Partner at Feldman Tucker Leifer Fidell LLP, and Kemba Eneas, Associate at Pillbsury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP. A copy of the study can be found at www.abf-sociolegal.org/ajd.pdf.

**Friday Evening:** My last event of the day was a blockbuster! The ABA's Committee on Women in the Profession hosted a town hall meeting titled "Are We There Yet: The Unfinished Journey of Women in the Legal Profession," which featured some of the most prominent female attorneys in the country:

- The Honorable Rosemary Barkett, U.S. Circuit Judge, Eleventh Circuit, United States Court of Appeals;
- Carol E. Dinkins, Partner, Vinson & Elkins LLP and Former U.S. Deputy Attorney General;
- Elaine R. Jones, Director-Counsel Emeritus of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund; and
- Janet Reno, Former Attorney General of the United States.

The lively panel was moderated by attorney Jami Floyd of Court TV and the participants shared inspiring stories and powerful advice regarding such topics as the value of a good mentor and finding the work-family balance. Elaine Jones brought down the house as she recounted the challenges of being the first black woman to graduate from the University of Virginia Law School while Carole Dinkins offered words of wisdom learned from being the first female partner at Vinson & Elkins. A small, intimate reception followed during which it was possible to meet all of these trail-blazing female attorneys and thank them for their contributions to the profession.

**Saturday–9am:** The Assembly was convened and the YLD Delegates gathered to debate three contested resolutions. In addition to a resolution asking for a super-majority to pass votes (which failed), the Delegates also debated resolutions concerning "apology legislation" and the right of employers to exclude guns from the workplace. The Delegates were also addressed by ABA leaders as wells as a contingent of young lawyers from Canadian Bar Association, which is hosting the YLD's Spring Conference in Montreal this year. A list of all of the contested and uncontested resolutions considered by the YLD can be found at http://www.abanet.org/yld/midyear07. Details about the Spring Conference are at www.abanet.org/yld/spring07.

Heather L. Hodges is an Associate at Arnold & Porter LLP and a co-editor of Raising The Bar.



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