



2009-2010, ISSUE III

## In This Issue

[WBA Community Service Project: A Wider Circle](#)

[WBA Announces Woman Lawyer of the Year](#)

[President's Column](#)

[WBA Foundation](#)

[Committee & Forum Highlights](#)

[Member News](#)

[Feature: High Tea Society](#)

[Feature: WCL Lawyer Re-Entry Program](#)

[back to front page](#)

## Events

**[Fri., Mar. 12, 2010](#)**

*Lawyers at Home Forum  
Lawyers at Home Luncheon*

**[Thurs., Mar. 18, 2010](#)**

*Tax and Business Law Forum  
Fraud Risk in the New Economy:  
A Brown Bag Luncheon*

**[Wed., Mar. 24, 2010](#)**

*Tax and Business Forum & Solo  
and Small Practice Forum  
Wellness for Attorneys*

**[Thurs., Mar. 25, 2010](#)**

*Career Development Committee  
Building Social Capital: An  
Interactive Program for Women  
Lawyers on How to Draw on  
Your Personal and Professional*

## WBA Community Service Project: A Wider Circle

By Kelly Fisher, Koonz, McKenney, Johnson, DePaolis & Lightfoot, LLP; Helen Hong George, Internal Revenue Service; and Mark Bergel, Ph.D., A Wider Circle

On Saturday, May 15, 2010, the Women's Bar Association will team up with [A Wider Circle](#) to conduct a beautification project at a low-income school in Southeast DC. The WBA will also collect donations for A Wider Circle's [Well Mother](#), [Well Baby](#) and [Neighbor to Neighbor](#) programs. This event will kick off a long-term partnership between the WBA and A Wider Circle.

A Wider Circle is a local 501(c)3 non-profit whose mission is simple: to help individuals and families lift themselves out of poverty. Each day, A Wider Circle provides basic need items to families transitioning out of shelters or simply living without life's necessities. They also go into low-income schools and shelters to lead educational workshops on topics ranging from healthy self-esteem and stress management to resumé writing and financial planning. While they do serve some two-parent families, they find that approximately 90% of their clientele are single-parent, female-headed households, and the majority of these women have three or more children.

A Wider Circle recognizes that people's surroundings have a significant effect on their sense of self-worth. One of the repercussions of poverty is the low self-esteem that comes from living in neglected neighborhoods. The WBA's collaboration with A Wider Circle will aim to beautify a neglected neighborhood as well as provide for the needs of the neighborhoods' residents. Volunteers are encouraged to bring with them a healthy non-perishable item, a self-care item, or new cleaning supplies to benefit vulnerable residents in A Wider Circle's programs. For a list of items most needed by A Wider Circle, visit their [Wish List](#). If you have furniture you would like to donate, please [contact the WBA](#) to arrange for a pick up.

**The WBA needs your support to make this important program a success.** Friends, colleagues, significant others, and family members are welcome! If you would like to volunteer for this project, please visit [www.wbadc.org](http://www.wbadc.org) for more information and to sign up. If you have any questions, please contact Community Projects Committee co-chairs: Kelly Fisher (202-822-1892, [kfisher@koonz.com](mailto:kfisher@koonz.com)) and Helen Hong-George at (202-435-5239, [honggeorge@hotmail.com](mailto:honggeorge@hotmail.com)).

## A Wider Circle by the Numbers:

**15,748...**

the total number of children and adults served in 2009 through all programs

**1,805...**

the number of homes furnished in 2009

**515...**

the number of educational workshops delivered in 2009 at low-income schools and shelters

Relationships to Accomplish  
Your Goals

**250...**  
the number of calls received every day

**Wed., Apr. 8, 2010**

*American Constitution Society  
Washington, DC Lawyer  
Chapter, WBADC, and The  
Hispanic Bar Association of  
Washington, DC*  
Networking Mixer at Co Co. Sala

**125...**  
the cost, in dollars, to furnish the homes of five families in need

**7...**  
the number of days every week they serve the community

**Wed., Apr. 14, 2010**

*Solo and Small Practice Forum*  
Solo and Small Practice  
Luncheon

[back to top](#)

**Thurs., Apr. 15, 2010**

*Insurance Law Forum*  
Let's Do Lunch: Business  
Development Your Way

**Wed., Apr. 21, 2010**

*Communications Law Forum*  
Recent Developments in  
Communications Technology

**Wed., Apr. 29, 2010**

*American Bar Association*  
Women in Law Leadership  
(WILL) Academy

**Wed., May 5, 2010**

*Communications Law Forum*  
Top Women in Government:  
Lunch with Mary Beth Richards

**Wed., May 12, 2010**

*Solo and Small Practice Forum*  
Solo and Small Practice  
Luncheon

**Sat., May 15, 2010**

*Community Projects Committee*  
Community Service Project: A  
Wider Circle

**Tues., May 25, 2010**

WBA/WBA Foundation Annual  
Dinner

## About Us

[WBA Board of Directors](#)

[WBA Foundation Board of  
Directors](#)

[Sustaining Members](#)





2009-2010, ISSUE III

## In This Issue

[WBA Community Service Project: A Wider Circle](#)

[WBA Announces Woman Lawyer of the Year](#)

[President's Column](#)

[WBA Foundation](#)

[Committee & Forum Highlights](#)

[Member News](#)

[Feature: High Tea Society](#)

[Feature: WCL Lawyer Re-Entry Program](#)

[back to front page](#)

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## WBA to Honor Nancy Duff Campbell as 2010 Woman Lawyer of the Year



The WBA, in conjunction with the WBA Foundation, will honor **Nancy Duff Campbell**, founder and co-president of the [National Women's Law Center \(NWLC\)](#), as the WBA Woman Lawyer of the Year at the Annual Dinner on May 25, 2010. The [Woman Lawyer of the Year Award](#) recognizes a woman for her exceptional achievements in the legal profession and/or for her extraordinary contributions to the advancement of women in the profession.

## Events

### [Fri., Mar. 12, 2010](#)

*Lawyers at Home Forum  
Lawyers at Home Luncheon*

### [Thurs., Mar. 18, 2010](#)

*Tax and Business Law Forum  
Fraud Risk in the New Economy:  
A Brown Bag Luncheon*

### [Wed., Mar. 24, 2010](#)

*Tax and Business Forum & Solo  
and Small Practice Forum  
Wellness for Attorneys*

### [Thurs., Mar. 25, 2010](#)

*Career Development Committee  
Building Social Capital: An  
Interactive Program for Women  
Lawyers on How to Draw on  
Your Personal and Professional*

The theme for this year's WBA/WBAF Annual Dinner and awards ceremony, "Community Service," is particularly fitting for Ms. Campbell. She is nationally recognized as a leading women's rights advocate. For over 40 years, Ms. Campbell has spearheaded the development of women's legal rights through litigation, legislative advocacy, appearances before the Executive Branch and its agencies, and public education. She has participated in the development of key initiatives advancing and protecting women's rights, particularly in the areas of education, employment, health and reproductive rights, and family economic security.

In 1978, after four years of teaching law full time—first at Catholic University and then Georgetown University Law Center—Ms. Campbell brought her particular expertise on low-income women's issues to the Women's Rights Project of the Center for Law and Social Policy. In 1981, under her direction and that of her co-president, Marcia Greenberger, and of Board Chair Brooksley Born, the Women's Rights Project became the NWLC, now recognized as one of the nation's pre-eminent women's rights organizations, dedicated to furthering the legal rights and interests of women and girls, with a special emphasis on low-income women and their families.

In her over 30 years at NWLC, Ms. Campbell, known to all as "Duffy," has been a leader in securing significant legislation for women and their families, including:

- the Tax Reform Act of 1986, which improved the tax treatment of single heads of households, increased the child care tax credit, and removed 6 million poor families from the tax rolls;
- the Social Security Amendments of 1983, which both ensured the system's fiscal stability for years to come and expanded benefits for older women; and
- the 1990 Child Care and Development Block Grant, which was the first comprehensive

Relationships to Accomplish  
Your Goals

**Wed., Apr. 8, 2010**

*American Constitution Society  
Washington, DC Lawyer  
Chapter, WBADC, and The  
Hispanic Bar Association of  
Washington, DC*  
Networking Mixer at Co Co. Sala

**Wed., Apr. 14, 2010**

*Solo and Small Practice Forum*  
Solo and Small Practice  
Luncheon

**Thurs., Apr. 15, 2010**

*Insurance Law Forum*  
Let's Do Lunch: Business  
Development Your Way

**Wed., Apr. 21, 2010**

*Communications Law Forum*  
Recent Developments in  
Communications Technology

**Wed., Apr. 29, 2010**

*American Bar Association*  
Women in Law Leadership  
(WILL) Academy

**Wed., May 5, 2010**

*Communications Law Forum*  
Top Women in Government:  
Lunch with Mary Beth Richards

**Wed., May 12, 2010**

*Solo and Small Practice Forum*  
Solo and Small Practice  
Luncheon

**Sat., May 15, 2010**

*Community Projects Committee*  
Community Service Project: A  
Wider Circle

**Tues., May 25, 2010**

WBA/WBA Foundation Annual  
Dinner

federal child care legislation since World War II.

She has been counsel in landmark litigation that has expanded women's opportunities, including:

- *Haffer v. Temple University*, the first Title IX case to successfully challenge an entire university athletic program's sex discrimination;
- *Parents Without Partners v. Massinga*, which established a legal right to state child support enforcement services without regard to income; and
- *Califano v. Westcoll*, which established that needy unemployed women, not just unemployed men, could receive public assistance benefits for their children.

Ms. Campbell participated as counsel or amicus curiae in several cases that both reached the Supreme Court and expanded the rights of public assistance recipients—the vast majority of whom are women—in the six years she worked at the Center on Social Welfare Policy and Law (now the National Center for Law and Economic Justice). One of her first assignments at the Center was to write a petition for certiorari in a case that few thought would be accepted by the Supreme Court. It involved the right of poor tenant farmers to challenge a federal regulation permitting their landlords to accept assignments of future federal crop payments as rent, which the tenants feared would permit landlords to force them to do all their financing through their landlords. Not only did the Supreme Court take the case, but it ruled in favor of the tenants in a case that still stands as one of the most important in the law of standing to sue, *Barlow v. Collins*.

Ms. Campbell also helped develop the first comprehensive set of Materials on Welfare Law, which were distributed across the country to help legal services lawyers master the intricacies of the then-new and developing area of the law, and she helped teach, with Ruth Bader Ginsberg (later appointed to the Supreme Court), the first classes on women and the law at Columbia University, before there was an official course on the topic.

The 2010 WBA/WBA Foundation Annual Dinner and awards ceremony will take place at the National Building Museum at 6:00 p.m., Tuesday, May 25, 2010. For additional information about the WBA/WBA Foundation Annual Dinner, including tickets and sponsorship opportunities, call 202-639-8880 or go to [www.wbadc.org](http://www.wbadc.org).

[back to top](#)

---

## About Us

[WBA Board of Directors](#)

[WBA Foundation Board of Directors](#)

[Sustaining Members](#)





2009-2010, ISSUE III

## In This Issue

[WBA Community Service Project: A Wider Circle](#)

[WBA Announces Woman Lawyer of the Year](#)

[President's Column](#)

[WBA Foundation](#)

[Committee & Forum Highlights](#)

[Member News](#)

[Feature: High Tea Society](#)

[Feature: WCL Lawyer Re-Entry Program](#)

[back to front page](#)

## Events

**Fri., Mar. 12, 2010**

*Lawyers at Home Forum  
Lawyers at Home Luncheon*

**Thurs., Mar. 18, 2010**

*Tax and Business Law Forum  
Fraud Risk in the New Economy:  
A Brown Bag Luncheon*

**Wed., Mar. 24, 2010**

*Tax and Business Forum & Solo  
and Small Practice Forum  
Wellness for Attorneys*

**Thurs., Mar. 25, 2010**

*Career Development Committee  
Building Social Capital: An  
Interactive Program for Women  
Lawyers on How to Draw on  
Your Personal and Professional*

## President's Column: Continuing the Conversation — Advancing Women In-House Counsel

By Consuela Pinto, WBA President



On March 10, 2010, the WBA launched Phase III of its groundbreaking Initiative on Retention and Advancement of Women with a day-long summit entitled [Navigating the Corporate Matrix: Advancing Women In-House Counsel](#). The first two phases of our nationally recognized Initiative took an in depth look at the barriers to women's advancement in law firms as well as the unique barriers that women of color face in law firms. The WBA is very excited to continue the conversation, building on the facts and lessons learned through Phases I and II, to identify and address the unique challenges facing women in in-house law departments.

Phase I addressed three key questions relating to the retention and advancement of women in law firms: What do DC firms and women lawyers perceive to be the stumbling blocks to their mutual success in moving more women farther faster? What are DC firms doing already to keep and promote women? And, can we use the answers to those two questions to discern new ideas and better ways to stem the departure of women from law practice?

The WBA convened a series of conferences that drew firm leaders into a full and cooperative exchange with the experts and the women who attended. Through these exchanges, we learned that women leave when their capabilities are not valued, or their contributions are not acknowledged or recognized. Discussions focused on the current strategies in place at law firms and revealed that the core of the problem is the need to help all women, including part-time lawyers, from day one, to begin their development into senior partners and rainmakers. The last in the series of conferences identified best practices for developing and advancing successful women. The results of these conferences and a roadmap for success are reported in [Creating Pathways to Success](#) (WBA 2006).

Building on the success of its 2006 report, the WBA Initiative moved into its second phase with a focus on the dwindling number of women of color in law firms. The WBA convened a day-long summit bringing together more than 100 law-firm leaders, experts, lawyers, and law students to exchange ideas on issues affecting the recruitment, retention and promotion of women attorneys of color. We challenged lawyers, law firms, law schools, and bar associations to lead the profession and the nation on inclusion through productive dialogue and discussion. Participants and speakers rose to the challenge identifying several concrete recommendations for addressing the combined effects of gender and race that impact the success and advancement of women attorneys of color. The WBA's second Initiative report published in May 2008, [Creating Pathways to Success for All](#), surveys the literature, presents findings from the Summit, and details action-steps that all stakeholders with an interest in this issue—law-firm leaders, lawyers, clients, law schools, and bar associations—can undertake to stem the attrition of women of color from our law firms.

Phase III, like Phases I and II, breaks new ground by filling in the gaps in information caused by the dearth of scholarship on the issue of advancing women in-house counsel. WBA's Task Force on the Retention and Advancement of Women, in conjunction with an advisory board of

Relationships to Accomplish  
Your Goals

**Wed., Apr. 8, 2010**

*American Constitution Society  
Washington, DC Lawyer  
Chapter, WBADC, and The  
Hispanic Bar Association of  
Washington, DC*  
Networking Mixer at Co Co. Sala

**Wed., Apr. 14, 2010**

*Solo and Small Practice Forum*  
Solo and Small Practice  
Luncheon

**Thurs., Apr. 15, 2010**

*Insurance Law Forum*  
Let's Do Lunch: Business  
Development Your Way

**Wed., Apr. 21, 2010**

*Communications Law Forum*  
Recent Developments in  
Communications Technology

**Wed., Apr. 29, 2010**

*American Bar Association*  
Women in Law Leadership  
(WILL) Academy

**Wed., May 5, 2010**

*Communications Law Forum*  
Top Women in Government:  
Lunch with Mary Beth Richards

**Wed., May 12, 2010**

*Solo and Small Practice Forum*  
Solo and Small Practice  
Luncheon

**Sat., May 15, 2010**

*Community Projects Committee*  
Community Service Project: A  
Wider Circle

**Tues., May 25, 2010**

WBA/WBA Foundation Annual  
Dinner

nationally recognized experts and in-house counsel from a range of industries, will identify the challenges to advancement that our in-house colleagues experience. Such challenges include, among other things, a less-well defined career path and progression to the top, limited meaningful opportunities to develop an internal networks, and resources for navigating the business side of the house. In keeping with the WBA philosophy that we never identify a problem without offering a solution, we are developing concrete practical action steps for overcoming these challenges. Our goal is to have our community again place itself on the national map as forward-thinkers whose leaders have come together, listened to the experts present the latest objective research, shared best practices and frustrations, and undertaken a frank self-appraisal of how to move the ball forward in the continuing effort to improve retention of women attorneys and their advancement to the highest ranks of our profession. We are trying to gather our findings in terms of challenges and solutions in our third report, *Navigating the Corporate Matrix*, due for publication in May 2010.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many people who have contributed their time and expertise to this program. The WBA would not have been able to undertake this groundbreaking project without the assistance of our Advisory Board, Task Force, and Working Group.

**Phase III Advisory Board Members    Phase III Working Group Members**

Shari Crittendon, United Negro College Fund  
Maureen Del Duca, Marriott  
Dorian Denburg, AT&T  
Mary Kennard, American University  
Ann Klee, GE  
Lori Knauer, DuPont  
Nancy Newkirk, Major Lindsay Africa  
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Veta Richardson, MCCA  
Wendy Schmidt, Deloitte  
Joyce Slocum, NPR  
Brande Stelling, Catalyst  
Robert Stern, Sodexo  
Robyn Welter, Sodexo

Initiative Co-Chair: Monica Parham, Crowell & Moring LLP  
Initiative Co-Chair: Holly Loiseau, Weil Gotshal & Manges  
Working Group Chair: Sonia Murphy, Howrey, LLP  
WBA President: Consuela Pinto  
Alejandra Almonte, Weil Gotshal & Manges  
Linda Chanow, Center for Women in Law, University of Texas  
School of Law  
Jamellah Ellis, Verizon  
Wanda Forrest, Huron Consulting Group  
Judith Gheuens, Amgen  
Josephine Harriott, Miller & Chevalier  
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[back to top](#)

## About Us

[WBA Board of Directors](#)

[WBA Foundation Board of Directors](#)

[Sustaining Members](#)







2009-2010, ISSUE III

## In This Issue

[WBA Community Service Project: A Wider Circle](#)

[WBA Announces Woman Lawyer of the Year](#)

[President's Column](#)

[WBA Foundation](#)

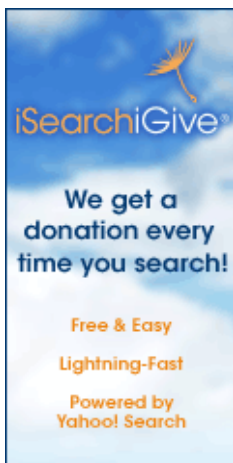
[Committee & Forum Highlights](#)

[Member News](#)

[Feature: High Tea Society](#)

[Feature: WCL Lawyer Re-Entry Program](#)

[back to front page](#)



## Events

[Fri., Mar. 12, 2010](#)  
*Lawyers at Home Forum*



## On this page:

- [The WBAF Awards Grants Amidst Ever-Growing Need](#)
- [Fighting For The Sanctuary Of Home](#)
- [WBAF 7th Annual Wine Tasting & Silent Auction](#)

## WBAF Awards Grants Amidst Ever-Growing Need



By **Diana M. Savit**, WBA Foundation President

One of the Women's Bar Association Foundation's most important annual activities is to consider the many worthy applications we receive for grants and then to allocate our funds—never as large a pool as we would like—to the organizations we believe will best fulfill our mission to improve the legal profession, advance the interests of women in the profession, and aid indigent women and children, particularly those with legal problems.

To be considered for a grant, the applicant must provide detailed information, including a description of the specific project for which the WBAF's money will be used; the need to be addressed; if an established organization, what it has accomplished in the past, how the proposed project fits into the WBAF's overall mission; how it raises and spends its own money; and a budget for use of the grant funds. All grant recipients must also later report to us how the grant money actually was used—including their assessment of the success of their efforts—and must return any unused grant money to us. The WBAF is particularly excited when we can provide seed money to a new venture that will address a previously unmet need, but we also find ourselves making repeat grants to groups that have shown they can put our money to good use.

As the WBA's charitable arm, the Foundation, in its grant-making function, helps our members satisfy every lawyer's obligation to strive for more perfect justice and to make that justice available to all, not just those who can pay for it.

At its December meeting, the Foundation board voted to award grants to nine worthy organizations. They are:

[Ayuda, Inc.](#), to assistant immigrant women and their children who are victims of domestic violence.

Lawyers at Home Luncheon

**Thurs., Mar. 18, 2010**

*Tax and Business Law Forum*  
Fraud Risk in the New Economy:  
A Brown Bag Luncheon

**Wed., Mar. 24, 2010**

*Tax and Business Forum & Solo*  
*and Small Practice Forum*  
Wellness for Attorneys

**Thurs., Mar. 25, 2010**

*Career Development Committee*  
Building Social Capital: An  
Interactive Program for Women  
Lawyers on How to Draw on  
Your Personal and Professional  
Relationships to Accomplish  
Your Goals

**Wed., Apr. 8, 2010**

*American Constitution Society*  
*Washington, DC Lawyer*  
*Chapter, WBADC, and The*  
*Hispanic Bar Association of*  
*Washington, DC*  
Networking Mixer at Co Co. Sala

**Wed., Apr. 14, 2010**

*Solo and Small Practice Forum*  
Solo and Small Practice  
Luncheon

**Thurs., Apr. 15, 2010**

*Insurance Law Forum*  
Let's Do Lunch: Business  
Development Your Way

**Wed., Apr. 21, 2010**

*Communications Law Forum*  
Recent Developments in  
Communications Technology

**Wed., Apr. 29, 2010**

*American Bar Association*  
Women in Law Leadership  
(WILL) Academy

**Wed., May 5, 2010**

*Communications Law Forum*  
Top Women in Government:  
Lunch with Mary Beth Richards

**Wed., May 12, 2010**

*Solo and Small Practice Forum*  
Solo and Small Practice  
Luncheon

**Sat., May 15, 2010**

*Community Projects Committee*  
Community Service Project: A  
Wider Circle

**Tues., May 25, 2010**

[The DC Volunteer Lawyers Project](#) (also named a 2009 WBA Star of the Bar), to provide professional liability insurance and online research tools for its cadre of volunteers who offer pro bono representation in family law matters for low-income residents of the District of Columbia.

[The Domestic Violence Legal Empowerment and Appeals Project](#), to provide general support for DVLEAP's multi-faceted program, which focuses on appellate advocacy for domestic violence victims.

[EduSeed's SisterMentors](#) program, to help fund its annual round of college visits for girls of color from low-income families as part of its overall mentoring program for these girls.

[Interstages](#), to support its daily after-school youth development program for middle school girls in Southeast Washington, DC. The program provides academic, creative, social and personal growth opportunities for low-income girls in grades 6, 7, and 8.

[Legal Counsel for the Elderly](#), to support its Alternative to Landlord/Tenant Court Project, which primarily serves low-income women and persons of color (two out of every three seniors 75 years old or above are women, and older women are twice as likely as men to live in poverty).

[The Polaris Project](#), to support its Washington, DC Trafficking Intervention Program, which assists the women and girls who are the DC-area's primary victims of human trafficking.

[Survivors & Advocates for Empowerment](#), to support its Court Advocacy Program (CAP) and its On-Call Advocacy Program (OCAP). CAP provides court-based advocacy services to domestic violence victims, while OCAP provides after-hours advocacy and crisis support, because domestic violence can take place at any time but after-hours services are not readily available.

[The Washington Middle School for Girls](#), for its Graduate Support Program, which provides guidance to its at-risk population in choosing and applying to high schools, and throughout their post-middle school education.

The WBAF is proud to support these organizations financially, especially in these difficult economic times, when charitable contributions are down but needs have increased exponentially. We urge you, the members of the WBA, to continue to support our grantees through your dollars and your time. [Contribute to the Foundation](#), so that we can continue to identify urgent needs in our community and funnel your money to the organizations that come to our attention, and then consider volunteering your time at one or more of our grantees. All of them serve members of Washington community who are easy to overlook and who are rarely encountered by successful lawyers in their comfortable offices. Take some time to make a real difference in the lives of some of our least fortunate fellow citizens.

And while you're at it, please join the WBAF in helping Haiti recover and rebuild following the January 12 earthquake. All of us were horrified by the scenes of devastation that attracted worldwide attention. The numbers of the dead, injured, homeless and orphaned are almost beyond comprehension. While most of us cannot be on the ground, providing direct support and comfort for these victims of cataclysm, we also cannot ignore their needs merely because they are remote. For that reason, the Foundation board voted on January 14, 2010, to grant \$5,000 to the Grace House of Hope for Girls in Port-Au-Prince, Haiti, which operates schools and an orphanage. Grace House of Hope's buildings were destroyed in the earthquake, accompanied by injury and loss of life, meaning that it is considerably less able today to meet needs that have increased beyond measure. We of the Foundation hope that individual WBA members will join us by making personal contributions, through the WBAF, to help Grace House of Hope rebuild, recover, and serve the girls of Haiti. We thank the [Kirkland & Ellis Foundation](#), and WBAF past president Ellen Jakovic, for bringing the Grace House of Hope to our attention. Concentrating our efforts on this organization maximizes their impact and fulfills the WBAF's mission.

For before-and-after images of Grace House of Hope for Girls, [click here](#). To join the WBAF in support of its rescue and recovery, [click here](#). All individual contributions to the WBAF will be collected and forwarded to Grace House of Hope through the K&E Foundation. The Foundation

WBA/WBA Foundation Annual  
Dinner

thanks you in advance for your generosity.

[back to top](#)

---

## About Us

[WBA Board of Directors](#)

[WBA Foundation Board of  
Directors](#)

[Sustaining Members](#)

---

## Fighting For The Sanctuary Of Home

**By Jennifer Soleil Rodrigue, WBAF 2009 Founders Fellow**

*The Women's Bar Association Foundation Founders Fellowship, established in 2006 and awarded annually, supports area law students to work with local legal services providers on projects to benefit women and children in our community. The 2009 recipient was Jennifer Soleil Rodrigue of George Washington University Law School.*

Our homes are our castles, our sanctuaries, and our small circles of near-sacred privacy. But what if that home is a place of violence, threatened from within by broken peace and from without by broken rules? This summer, with the generous support of the Women's Bar Association Foundation Founders Fellowship, I worked with the [National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty](#) (NLCHP) in its efforts to protect the homes of victims of domestic violence.

NLCHP has positioned itself as the legal arm of the nationwide movement to combat homelessness. To drive this movement, NLCHP uses all the tools of social change: education, outreach, coalition building, policy advocacy, legislative reform, and impact litigation. The NLCHP project areas are similarly far-reaching, and include Human Rights, Policy, Domestic Violence, Civil Rights, Children and Youth, and Pro Bono Services, providing direct representation through partnerships with local firms. Interning in an organization with such a comprehensive and coordinated strategy was both inspiring and educational. As one of only two summer law clerks for the organization, I was able to significantly contribute to NLCHP's Domestic Violence project while gaining experience with each strategic tool in their arsenal.

Working with Cecelia Friedman-Levin, then the NLCHP Domestic Violence Attorney, illustrated for me how a dedicated advocate can weave initiatives together and exponentially increase impact through the power of partnerships. Ms. Levin welcomed me into every aspect of her project. I drew strongly on my experience volunteering with a domestic violence victim's crisis hotline, and my ongoing pro bono work providing information and referrals through an email hotline with Womenslaw.org for a basic understanding of the issues. Armed with that experience, I dove into the study of the housing provisions of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), and the morass of federal regulations governing an applicant's access to federally subsidized housing programs.

Many agencies and organizations are interested stakeholders in the "VAWA 2010" revision process. The NLCHP worked to bring the divergent interests to the table, seeking to solidify the common ground between Project Based Section 8 site owners, public housing agencies, and housing and domestic violence advocates. Industry groups and public housing authorities expressed concerns about damages to property and the peaceful enjoyment of other tenants. Housing and domestic violence advocates focused on ways to ensure the safety of the domestic violence victim while maintaining shelter for her and her children, and directing accountability for problems onto the abuser. One core group worked diligently on improvements to VAWA language. Another centered on expanding timely access to subsidized housing for domestic violence victims. Weeks of my time were spent researching legislative and regulatory provisions and pinpointing problematic language. During other days, I identified several regulatory provisions under which public housing authorities could provide domestic violence victims and their families with expedited access to assisted housing.

The coalition building, the careful fostering of partnerships, and the painstaking review and reworking of regulatory and legislative language was satisfactorily challenging, but remote from any perceptible effect on real women's lives. Then, on July 20, 2009, I was able to assist with another aspect of NLCHP's work: local advocacy and partnership building. That day Ms. Levin and I visited the Family Crisis Center in Brentwood Maryland where I delivered a VAWA housing provisions presentation and Ms. Levin nurtured a fledgling relationship

between NLCHP and the Center.

The staff of the multi-site Center gathered for the meeting in a large training room dotted with round tables. Those in attendance included shelter counselors, advocates, an attorney and even the Center's executive director. It was a milestone for me, and my happiness at being able to serve in this manner was nearly matched by my stage fright. Here I was, in my second summer of law school, doing the work of a social justice advocate! Somehow the immediacy of the situation made me conscious of my participation in a way that was very different than the hours I had spent laboring over regulations. This presentation to the Family Crisis Center staff was a way for me to directly promote the purpose of VAWA, by helping the Center staff understand the protections of the act and apply them on behalf of their clients.

As I nervously reviewed my notes, Ms. Levin gave a brief introduction, placing domestic violence in the broader context of homelessness. Then it was my turn. My challenge was to highlight the key areas of the VAWA housing provisions in a manner meaningful to direct service providers in just fifteen minutes. Essential topics of the presentation included the prohibition on denial of housing based on an individual's status as a victim; impermissible and permissible grounds for eviction; methods of certification including the detailed requirements for certification by the signed statement of a service provider; confidentiality provisions and exceptions; housing authority notice requirements; and the discretionary responses available to housing authorities when faced with a situation involving domestic violence.

During the talk, the Center staff responded positively, agreeing with the challenges remaining and nodding in recognition of some of the better known VAWA protections. At the most innovative portion of the talk, discussing the discretionary responses specifically allowed to local housing authorities and how this discretionary power might be leveraged for victims of domestic violence, several individuals began making notes. My oral presentation was supplemented by detailed handouts I had developed during the prior week, and which we distributed at the commencement of the meeting. In addition, we supplied the Center with sample certification forms and resource contact lists. From the attention and response we received I believe we were successful in our effort to deliver information on the explicit and mandatory terms of VAWA, as well as to suggest tactics of creative advocacy in areas where VAWA's purpose and discretionary provisions provide the impetus and backing for negotiation.

Our visit also seemed successful at beginning a closer partnership between NLCHP and the Center, to the benefit of both organizations. We specifically invited the Center and its staff to contact NLCHP with any discrepancies it observed between the requirements of VAWA and the Act's implementation. We also requested the Center relay anecdotes regarding their clients' housing struggles under Maryland law. Receiving real-world reports on the practical applications (and violations) of VAWA, and of local law, is an essential aspect of NLCHP's ability to accurately advocate for change. At the same time, the Center's executive director asked that they be allowed to look to NLCHP for technical assistance on Maryland law and on VAWA issues as they arise. Taking part in this direct partnership building completed the circle of advocacy for me; from creating national coalitions, to advancing regulatory and legislative reform, to on-the-ground implementation, which would then inform the next phase of work by the national coalitions.

Through my summer with the NLCHP, I learned first-hand the extent of a social justice attorney's work. This internship was invaluable to my personal and professional development, and it would not have been possible without the generous support of the Women's Bar Association Foundation Founders Fellowship.

[back to top](#)

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## **WBAF 7th Annual Wine Tasting & Silent Auction**

**By Michelle C. Thomas, M.C. Thomas & Associates, PC**



120 WBA Foundation supporters turned out to support the Founders Fellowship and engage in some friendly competition in the silent auction bidding.



Jennifer Duane, Colleen Yushchak and Michelle Turner enjoyed great food, wine, and networking at the wine tasting.

On January 28, 2010, the Women's Bar Association Foundation hosted its highly anticipated 7th Annual Wine Tasting and Silent Auction titled, *Value Vino: Finding Great Wines for Less*, at the law firm of WilmerHale. The Wine Tasting, which featured a delectable array of hors d'oeuvres, alluring wines, and plethora of auction items, did not disappoint!

This year, 120 new and familiar faces enjoyed a selection of wines, cheeses, and chocolates from around the world while bidding on auction items ranging from jewelry, art, and spa trips to restaurant gift certificates, beach house stays, golfing packages, and more! After being welcomed by WBA Foundation President **Diana Savit** and event Chair **Kirra L. Jarratt**, **Michael Rosenberg** of The Curious Grape Wine Shop wooed the crowd with an informative presentation on simple principles for finding great wines at a great value. This year's selection came from diverse locations, including Australia, Spain, Italy, France, and the United States. With economic challenges facing so many in the community, guests were pleased to learn how to select and enjoy exquisite, yet reasonably priced, wines.

Engaging conversations were heard across the room as guests mixed, mingled, and savoured each taste of wine while appreciating the opportunity to support this worthy cause. The WBA Foundation continues to support its mission of serving women in the legal profession and community by donating proceeds from the Wine Tasting and Silent Auction to its [Founders Fellowship](#), a program that provides stipends to area law students to support summer clerkships at local legal services providers on projects that benefit women and children in our community. Guests also had the opportunity to make a donation of any amount directly to the Foundation's Founders Fellowship. The Foundation is pleased to award the University of the District of Columbia David A. Clarke School of Law with this year's Founders Fellowship. In support of the WBA Foundation's charitable activities, [The Curious Grape](#) donated 15% of its sales from the evening.

The Foundation offers heartfelt thanks to the many donors of auction items, its patrons and supporters, as well as WilmerHale, Jenner & Block LLP, Reliable Litigation Services, and The Curious Grape for their in-kind services. In addition to committee chair Ms. Jarratt, we also thank committee members **Paulette E. Chapman**, **Tracy-Gene G. Durkin**, **M. Elizabeth**

**Medaglia and Michelle Thomas.** Until next year!

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[back to top](#)





2009-2010, ISSUE III

## In This Issue

[WBA Community Service Project: A Wider Circle](#)

[WBA Announces Woman Lawyer of the Year](#)

[President's Column](#)

[WBA Foundation](#)

[Committee & Forum Highlights](#)

[Member News](#)

[Feature: High Tea Society](#)

[Feature: WCL Lawyer Re-Entry Program](#)

[back to front page](#)

## Events

**[Fri., Mar. 12, 2010](#)**

*Lawyers at Home Forum  
Lawyers at Home Luncheon*

**[Thurs., Mar. 18, 2010](#)**

*Tax and Business Law Forum  
Fraud Risk in the New Economy:  
A Brown Bag Luncheon*

**[Wed., Mar. 24, 2010](#)**

*Tax and Business Forum & Solo  
and Small Practice Forum  
Wellness for Attorneys*

**[Thurs., Mar. 25, 2010](#)**

*Career Development Committee  
Building Social Capital: An  
Interactive Program for Women  
Lawyers on How to Draw on  
Your Personal and Professional  
Relationships to Accomplish  
Your Goals*

## Committee & Forum Highlights

### On this page:

- [Communications Law Forum Annual Holiday Tea](#)
- [Speed Mentoring](#)

## Communications Law Forum Annual Holiday Tea

By Jennifer Duane, Department of Commerce-NTIA



A sold-out crowd gathered in the Crystal Room for the popular holiday tea.



l-r: Communications Law Forum (CLF) co-chair Jennifer Duane, ABA President Carolyn Lamm, CLF co-chair Laura Mow, WBA President Consuela Pinto, CLF co-chair Lynne Milne

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Solo and Small Practice  
Luncheon

**Thurs., Apr. 15, 2010**

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Development Your Way

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Communications Technology

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(WILL) Academy

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*Communications Law Forum*  
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**Wed., May 12, 2010**

*Solo and Small Practice Forum*  
Solo and Small Practice  
Luncheon

**Sat., May 15, 2010**

*Community Projects Committee*  
Community Service Project: A  
Wider Circle

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WBA/WBA Foundation Annual  
Dinner

On December 16, 2009, the Communications Law Forum once again hosted its annual Holiday Tea at the famed Willard Intercontinental Hotel. This year's featured speaker was **Carolyn Lamm**, who, among her many notable accomplishments, currently serves as the President of the American Bar Association (ABA). Over 120 attendees filled the Willard's elegant Crystal Room, which was festively decorated for the holiday season, to hear Ms. Lamm's remarks, meet and mingle with their peers in the legal profession, and enjoy tea, scones, sandwiches and desserts. Background harp music provided a further touch of elegance.

With the afternoon high tea service underway, **Lynne Milne**, co-chair of the Communications Law Forum, kicked off the program by welcoming the attendees and highlighting activities that the forum has held over the past year, including the initiation of the forum's Top Women in Government Brown Bag Lunch series. She also thanked the event's sponsors, which included **Andrea Williams, Comcast, T-Mobile USA**, and the law firm of **Wilkinson, Barker & Knauer LLP**.

Co-chair **Jennifer Duane** then took the stage to introduce Ms. Lamm and describe a few highlights from her distinguished legal career. As a partner at White and Case, Ms. Lamm's legal practice focuses on international arbitration, international trade, and international commercial litigation matters and the representation of foreign corporate clients and sovereigns. Ms. Lamm was inducted as president of the ABA in August at its 2009 Annual Meeting, making her the first lawyer from the District of Columbia to lead the ABA in 50 years and just the fourth woman to serve in this capacity. Ms. Lamm has been active in the ABA for more than 25 years as a member of the House of Delegates (1982-2005) and the Board of Governors (2002-2005). She also served as the District of Columbia Bar's 26th president from 1997 to 1998. Over the course of her career, Ms. Lamm has served in a variety of leadership positions and has received multiple awards and recognitions, including being named one of the 50 Most Influential Women in America by the National Law Journal in 2007. A long-time member and supporter of the WBA, Ms. Lamm received the WBA's 2002 Woman Lawyer of the Year award.

Ms. Lamm remarked on several key initiatives that she is focusing on during her year-long tenure as ABA President, including increasing membership in the ABA, examining diversity in the legal profession, and addressing the regulation of lawyers in light of dramatic changes underway in technology and globalization. Ms. Lamm described [three commissions](#) she has formed to implement these initiatives: the Commission on Ethics 20/20, which will look at how ethics rules should change; the Commission on the Impact of the Economic Crisis on the Profession and Legal Needs, which will examine how the ABA can assist lawyers whose careers and practices have been adversely impacted by the economic recession; and the Diversity Commission, which will consider ways to make the legal profession better reflect the communities it serves, with an emphasis on promoting the advancement of women and minorities.

Ms. Lamm offered attendees valuable career advice and insights, covering in particular the importance of networking and mentoring to career advancement and the need to develop a substantive proficiency in one's legal specialty to ensure a successful practice. She entertained numerous questions from the audience on a wide range of topics, including the ABA's position changes to the concept of billable hours and the impact of economic challenges on law firm management.

The afternoon concluded with co-chair **Laura Mow** presenting Ms. Lamm with a teapot as a token of appreciation for her participation in what has become the Communications Law Forum's signature event. Preparations are already underway for an equally enjoyable Holiday Tea in 2010.

---

## About Us

[WBA Board of Directors](#)

[WBA Foundation Board of  
Directors](#)

[Sustaining Members](#)

[back to top](#)

---

## Speed Mentoring

By Yvonne Williams, Miller & Chevalier Chartered



Mentees received one-on-one mentoring sessions with some of the area's top attorneys.

Where would you find available for one-on-one mentorship and advice from the former WBA President, current WBA President and President-elect, the DC Bar President, one of Washington DC's most powerful attorneys, current and former law firm managing partners and executive committee members, and several other outstanding Washington DC women lawyers? At the WBA's Mentoring Committee **Speed Mentoring** reception held at Miller & Chevalier Chartered on October 28, 2009. At this reception, 19 outstanding women lawyers served as mentors to approximately 60 law students and junior lawyers seeking professional advice from the best.

It has been long established that effective mentoring relationships are critical to any lawyer's advancement—whether practicing at a law firm, in-house, or in the government—but it is the one thing many women lawyers are not receiving. The Speed Mentoring reception took a step toward changing that by connecting young lawyers with highly-established, well-connected women lawyers who they more than likely would never have otherwise met and had a substantive conversation with outside of the reception. The reception allowed mentees to participate in six-minute meetings with different mentors in several speed mentoring rounds. While six minutes may seem like a short period of time, it is enough time to establish the foundation for a lasting mentoring relationship. And our mentees and mentors have since built on that foundation. Many mentees have followed up with their mentors and obtained great leads on employment opportunities, long term professional development advice and, quite possibly, a mentor for life.

This event was a huge success because of the commitment of the WBA and the outstanding women lawyers of Washington, DC to creating effective mentoring relationships. Indeed, it is largely through strong mentoring relationships that all women attorneys are assured professional success. The Speed Mentoring reception was a wonderful start.



Mentoring Committee Co-Chair Yvonne Williams networked with mentees after the mentoring rounds, discussing what they thought of the program and what they found helpful.

[back to top](#)



2009-2010, ISSUE III

## In This Issue

[WBA Community Service Project: A Wider Circle](#)

[WBA Announces Woman Lawyer of the Year](#)

[President's Column](#)

[WBA Foundation](#)

[Committee & Forum Highlights](#)

[Member News](#)

[Feature: High Tea Society](#)

[Feature: WCL Lawyer Re-Entry Program](#)

[back to front page](#)

## Member News

### On this page:

- [Loretta Garcia Selected to Post in Montgomery County Office of Human Rights](#)
- [Amy Bess Joins Vedder Price](#)
- [Welcome New WBA Members!](#)

### Loretta Garcia Selected to Post in Montgomery County Office of Human Rights

**Loretta J. Garcia** has been selected as Manager of Compliance in the Montgomery County (MD) Office of Human Rights. In this position, she will be responsible for the Office's compliance with both Maryland and federal civil rights laws. In addition, she will supervise investigations and mediations on complaints related to employment discrimination, unfair housing claims, and discrimination in public accommodations. Prior to her selection, Ms. Garcia has been in private practice where she handled legal issues in employment law, family law, and estates & probate. She is a co-chair of the WBA's Solo and Small Practice Forum and Immediate Past President of the Hispanic Bar Association of DC.

[back to top](#)

## Events

### **Fri., Mar. 12, 2010**

*Lawyers at Home Forum*  
Lawyers at Home Luncheon

### **Thurs., Mar. 18, 2010**

*Tax and Business Law Forum*  
Fraud Risk in the New Economy:  
A Brown Bag Luncheon

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Wellness for Attorneys

### **Thurs., Mar. 25, 2010**

*Career Development Committee*  
Building Social Capital: An  
Interactive Program for Women  
Lawyers on How to Draw on  
Your Personal and Professional

### Amy Bess Joins Vedder Price

**Amy Bess** has joined the law firm of Vedder Price PC as a Shareholder. Ms. Bess is the former Managing Partner of Sonnenschein's DC office and a member of that firm's Litigation and Labor and Employment Law practices. She previously served on the WBA Board of Directors. A member of Vedder Price's Labor and Employment Law Group, Ms. Bess defends employers against claims of race, sex, disability and age discrimination, sexual harassment, whistleblowing, wrongful termination and wage and hour violations. Her work involves both day-to-day counseling on these matters as well as the representation of management in federal and state courts and a wide range of administrative agencies. Ms. Bess also represents employers in matters where employees violate employment agreements or attempt to misappropriate trade secrets.

[back to top](#)

Relationships to Accomplish  
Your Goals

**Wed., Apr. 8, 2010**

*American Constitution Society  
Washington, DC Lawyer  
Chapter, WBADC, and The  
Hispanic Bar Association of  
Washington, DC*  
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Luncheon

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Development Your Way

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Communications Technology

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Women in Law Leadership  
(WILL) Academy

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*Communications Law Forum*  
Top Women in Government:  
Lunch with Mary Beth Richards

**Wed., May 12, 2010**

*Solo and Small Practice Forum*  
Solo and Small Practice  
Luncheon

**Sat., May 15, 2010**

*Community Projects Committee*  
Community Service Project: A  
Wider Circle

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Dinner

## Welcome New WBA Members!

Leila Abolfazli  
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Suzette Blackwell  
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Ifetayo Davidson-Cade  
Danielle E. Davis  
Deanna Dawson  
Alexis Downing  
LaTisha Gotell Faulks  
Audrey B. Faus  
Tess Finnegan  
Eli B. Greer  
Jonathan Groner

LaShanta Harris  
Jennifer M. Hayes  
Tammy W. Hui  
Julianne R. Jaffe  
Holly Kirk  
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[back to top](#)

---

## About Us

[WBA Board of Directors](#)

[WBA Foundation Board of  
Directors](#)

[Sustaining Members](#)





2009-2010, ISSUE III

## In This Issue

[WBA Community Service Project: A Wider Circle](#)

[WBA Announces Woman Lawyer of the Year](#)

[President's Column](#)

[WBA Foundation](#)

[Committee & Forum Highlights](#)

[Member News](#)

[Feature: High Tea Society](#)

[Feature: WCL Lawyer Re-Entry Program](#)

[back to front page](#)

## High Tea Society: Potential With Grace and Confidence

By Heidi M. Pease



Mariessa Terrell-White, Judge Mary Terrell, and all 23 proteges at the Tea Dance.

*Lasting Friendships. Adventure. Glory. Charm. Journey. Etiquette. Respect. Encouragement. Love. College. Life. Culture. Dancing. Trips. Theatre.*

Those are the words that were used to describe the [High Tea Society](#) by four of the almost 25 girls currently in the High Tea Society program. I had the privilege to sit down with the girls and one of their mentors and High Tea Society founder, former DC Superior Court Judge **Mary Terrell**, to hear about their experiences with the High Tea Society and how the program can help other girls in similar circumstances.

## Events

**Fri., Mar. 12, 2010**

*Lawyers at Home Forum  
Lawyers at Home Luncheon*

**Thurs., Mar. 18, 2010**

*Tax and Business Law Forum  
Fraud Risk in the New Economy:  
A Brown Bag Luncheon*

**Wed., Mar. 24, 2010**

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and Small Practice Forum  
Wellness for Attorneys*

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Judge Mary Terrell had a vision. Newly sworn into the bench of the DC Superior Court in 1997, she was receiving invitations to speak at DC public schools and realized that the condition of the DC schools, and in particular the young girls in them, had deteriorated from the time that she was a school teacher in those same schools: they were on the brink of disaster. She gathered together some of her friends and colleagues who regularly met for Saturday afternoon tea and who also had a desire to reach out to mentor these girls and help them reach their full potential. The High Tea Society was born.

The High Tea Society pulls in 6th grade to 12th grade girls from R.H. Terrell Junior High School in Northwest Washington and Patricia Roberts Harris Educational Center in Southeast Washington and provides them with training and encouragement so that they are able to enter any social or professional setting and not only feel confident, but thrive and command respect. In her own words, Judge Terrell describes the purpose of the Society as forward-focused "preparation and life skills for the global community" and the girls as "ambassadors of change." In addition to weekly teas, for which the girls are provided with hats and gloves, the Society also regularly exposes the girls to a broad array of experiences by taking them to events at the Kennedy Center and Lincoln Theater, museums, mini-golfing, tea events at embassies, other cultural events, community service projects, and field trips to visit colleges. The Society has evolved from a weekly tea program with speakers to a comprehensive and holistic program that guides the girls throughout their junior high and high school years and off to college. The older girls have also started an investment club where they pool monthly dues to buy stock in Martha Stewart Living and also are about to embark on a tea business where they will plan and host teas for outside organizations. The girls' efforts culminated in a Tea Dance event this past September at the George Washington University Marvin Center Ballroom where they wore



Relationships to Accomplish  
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**Wed., Apr. 8, 2010**

*American Constitution Society  
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Luncheon*

**Thurs., Apr. 15, 2010**

*Insurance Law Forum  
Let's Do Lunch: Business  
Development Your Way*

**Wed., Apr. 21, 2010**

*Communications Law Forum  
Recent Developments in  
Communications Technology*

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(WILL) Academy*

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Top Women in Government:  
Lunch with Mary Beth Richards*

**Wed., May 12, 2010**

*Solo and Small Practice Forum  
Solo and Small Practice  
Luncheon*

**Sat., May 15, 2010**

*Community Projects Committee  
Community Service Project: A  
Wider Circle*

**Tues., May 25, 2010**

*WBA/WBA Foundation Annual  
Dinner*

---

## About Us

[WBA Board of Directors](#)

[WBA Foundation Board of  
Directors](#)

[Sustaining Members](#)

formal dresses, pearls, corsages, and long gloves and demonstrated their newly-learned and volunteer-taught circle waltz to "A Few of My Favorite Things" in front of nearly 200 family, friends, and organization supporters. The girls gave speeches about their involvement with the High Tea Society. They also demonstrated these skills during the Capital Catwalk, where they walked on the catwalk as models.

Another vital feature of the organization is the mentoring program that pairs the girls with adult mentors—ideally women in their intended field of study—who can support and encourage them and ultimately be someone that the girls can turn to for advice in future phases of their lives.

The inaugural chapter of the High Tea Society has now reached its capacity; Judge Terrell sees a benefit of the organization that it is a close-knit group of girls and women. She is now actively seeking to expand the organization by starting additional chapters, both in the DC area and beyond. Volunteer opportunities are available in all areas and at all commitment levels. Individuals can become involved in the organization as members (dues entitle them to come to events), as mentors where they have one-on-one constant interaction with one girl, or as volunteers, where they can be involved in one element of the program either on a one-time or recurring basis, such as by teaching a seminar or helping out with public relations.

For more information, visit <http://thehighteasociety.org> or email [info@highteasociety.org](mailto:info@highteasociety.org).

[back to top](#)

## Meet the Girls

### *Itallya, 6th Grade*

Itallya was a self-described former tomboy who says the High Tea Society has taught her how to be a lady and how to stay out of arguments in school. She would like to become a veterinarian. When asked what her favorite activity with the Society has been, she responded enthusiastically "everything!" She repeated over and over how she would love to bring more friends along to be able to benefit from the Society's activities and training so that they are able to experience the same transformation.

### *Brandi, 10th Grade*

Brandi says the Society has taught her life skills and has forced her to limit making excuses that she can't achieve a certain result. Since joining the Saturday program nearly two years ago, she increased her GPA and has received support for SAT prep. She wants to be a doctor. The Society has encouraged her goals and taught her that nothing will be handed to her; she can work towards her goals. Brandi affirms that it all starts with liking yourself and having the confidence and motivation to achieve your dreams.

### *Thapura, 12th Grade*

Thapura has been a Society member for most of her life. She started attending with her older sister, Shileatha, who was also a member. She intends to be a nurse and has had the benefit of being paired with mentors who can help her reach this goal. Recently,

## Meet a Mentor

### *Alicia Peterson*

Ms. Peterson is a Hill staffer who has been with the Society since 2000. During this time, she has mentored three young ladies at the same time from age 10 on. Two of those three are now in college. She and her mentees have been on trips in and out of town (NYC), gone bowling, and toured college campuses. She also advocated for one of her mentees to receive a scholarship, which she was able to help raise through the Society, for room and board at a private high school in DC. She also placed one of her mentees with an internship with the Congressional Black Caucus. She would highly recommend becoming a mentor for anyone who likes working with young women and likes the joy of seeing them grow and thrive. She says there is no better feeling than seeing them progress from young, shy girls to poised women who are comfortable in their own skin and in all situations. Because of her busy schedule, she has a co-mentor. Though mentors are not obligated to attend all of the regular Society events, she highlights the importance of mentoring the girls through their progression in the Society and also of staying in constant communication, either through in-person outings or phone conversations, to build a close relationship so that the girls feel comfortable to call when an issue arises.

she has been visiting colleges through the organization. She says that the most important benefit of her participation in the Society is knowing herself and being able to know how to speak and act in any environment.

[back to top](#)



2009-2010, ISSUE III

## In This Issue

[WBA Community Service Project: A Wider Circle](#)

[WBA Announces Woman Lawyer of the Year](#)

[President's Column](#)

[WBA Foundation](#)

[Committee & Forum Highlights](#)

[Member News](#)

[Feature: High Tea Society](#)

[Feature: WCL Lawyer Re-Entry Program](#)

[back to front page](#)

## Events

**[Fri., Mar. 12, 2010](#)**

*Lawyers at Home Forum*  
*Lawyers at Home Luncheon*

**[Thurs., Mar. 18, 2010](#)**

*Tax and Business Law Forum*  
*Fraud Risk in the New Economy: A Brown Bag Luncheon*

**[Wed., Mar. 24, 2010](#)**

*Tax and Business Forum & Solo and Small Practice Forum*  
*Wellness for Attorneys*

**[Thurs., Mar. 25, 2010](#)**

*Career Development Committee*  
*Building Social Capital: An Interactive Program for Women Lawyers on How to Draw on Your Personal and Professional Relationships to Accomplish Your Goals*

## Re-Entering Lawyers Build Their Future at American University Washington College of Law

By Ellen Dickstein Kominers, J.D.



WBA President Consuela Pinto shared her own re-entry experience with the group.



WBA Past President Karen Lockwood spoke at the Re-Entry event.

Taking their seats that early October morning in the law school classroom at American University, the nearly 40 students might have looked like an impressively diverse law school section, but they were in fact a special group of students: re-entering lawyers, enrolled in the second annual [Washington College of Law Lawyer Re-Entry Program](#), co-sponsored by the Women's Bar Association.

Attendees included women who interrupted their careers to care for elderly parents; men who took a hiatus from the practice of law to raise young children; students in their 50s and students in their 20s; lawyers with degrees from a wide range of U.S. schools, including Harvard, UCLA, Chicago, Tulane, and American, and lawyers with degrees from law schools abroad; and classmates who were U.S.-born and those who hailed from countries as varied as Ghana and Ireland. Most lawyers in the class had practiced law for 5, 10, or 20 years, but some had followed other paths, including launching and running successful businesses. And although most lawyers in the class lived in the DC area, students commuted from out of the area, too, with one student even coming in for classes from Texas!

**Wed., Apr. 8, 2010**

*American Constitution Society  
Washington, DC Lawyer  
Chapter, WBADC, and The  
Hispanic Bar Association of  
Washington, DC*  
Networking Mixer at Co Co. Sala

**Wed., Apr. 14, 2010**

*Solo and Small Practice Forum*  
Solo and Small Practice  
Luncheon

**Thurs., Apr. 15, 2010**

*Insurance Law Forum*  
Let's Do Lunch: Business  
Development Your Way

**Wed., Apr. 21, 2010**

*Communications Law Forum*  
Recent Developments in  
Communications Technology

**Wed., Apr. 29, 2010**

*American Bar Association  
Women in Law Leadership  
(WILL) Academy*

**Wed., May 5, 2010**

*Communications Law Forum*  
Top Women in Government:  
Lunch with Mary Beth Richards

**Wed., May 12, 2010**

*Solo and Small Practice Forum*  
Solo and Small Practice  
Luncheon

**Sat., May 15, 2010**

*Community Projects Committee*  
Community Service Project: A  
Wider Circle

**Tues., May 25, 2010**

WBA/WBA Foundation Annual  
Dinner



Students from the October program remain in touch and support one another to this day.

What all had in common was the urge to explore, in the program's structured and supportive environment, the possibilities for reclaiming their legal careers. Shepherded by Lawyer Re-Entry Program Executive Director **Linda Mercurio** and instructed by Washington College of Law faculty, students received guidance as they created new writing samples and updated their legal research skills. Program faculty advised students in concrete job search strategies and helped them practice their interview techniques, update their resumes, and refine their cover letters.

Even more, the program's faculty and staff provided inspiration and guidance for the students, who were keenly aware that they were preparing to reenter the legal profession in a challenging economic environment. Through coaching and peer-to-peer support, the program helped students identify their talents and strengths. Inspiring guest speakers included members of the inaugural (2008) Lawyer Re-Entry Program class, as well as **Consuela Pinto**, WBA President, and **Karen Lockwood**, a WBA Past President.

Even with the formal curriculum of the class ended, the program continues to support the students through career coaching provided by Ms. Mercurio. The class, in fact, established such supportive relationships that it continues to meet, both in locality-based small break-out groups, and in a whole-class monthly session in space provided by the law school.

These lawyers face challenges as they get back on their career track, but they also bring tremendous value to future employers and clients. The Lawyer Re-Entry Program helped them focus their energies, time, and talents on the task of getting back on that on-ramp. In the words of one member of the class, as she looked back on the experience: "This course was the perfect preface to the next chapter in my life."

[back to top](#)

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