

2011-2012, ISSUE I



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Wednesday, September 14, 2011,
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[2011 Stars of the Bar Reception](#)
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WBA
FOUNDATION **Donate Now**

WBA Foundation President's Letter



By Tracy-Gene G. Durkin

It's been an honor to serve as President of the Women's Bar Association Foundation (WBAF) for 2010-2011. And I am excited to embark on a second term for the next bar year. As you know, the mission of the WBAF, the sister organization of the WBA, is to:

- Promote and advance women in the legal profession;
- Promote a greater understanding and awareness of legal issues of importance to women; and
- Provide access to legal representation for and promote the education and advancement of disadvantaged women and girls in our community.

For almost 30 years, the WBAF has been fulfilling this mission with your generous support.

This past year, I spent a lot of time thinking about women and philanthropy, and I want to share with you some research that has just been released on this very topic. In their recent report, "[Causes Women Support](#)," the Women's Philanthropy Institute at the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University noted that female-headed houses are more likely than or as likely to give as male-headed households in every charitable sector. This study and its findings re-enforces what we at the WBAF already know—gender matters in philanthropy.

A second study released late in 2010 had equally compelling news for the Foundation and our mission. That study was the [Portrait Project \(PDF\)](#) released by the Washington Area Women's Foundation. Unfortunately, the news in that study was far from good. Twenty-six percent of all African American women and girls in the District of Columbia live below the federal poverty line. While one out of every five female headed households in our region is poor, poverty is not limited to the young. Nearly one in five women between the ages of 75 and 84 in the District of Columbia is poor.

Both of these studies underscore the importance of the Foundation and its mission and reminds us all that as women it is important that we SUPPORT women. To that end, the Foundation has been hard at work.

At the beginning of my term last summer, we took on two large scale projects:

kick-off. Watch for details in our bi-weekly News & Events email and at wbadc.org.

About Us

[WBA Board of Directors](#)

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- A major reorganization of our grant making process; and
- The development of a long-range planning process for the Foundation.

Under the leadership of our vice president and grants committee chair, **Kirra Jarratt**, our Grants Committee enabled us to reach out to a **significantly larger number of organizations** than ever before, nearly doubling the number of grants made in the prior year. And while we continued to make grants to many organizations we have supported in the past, many of our 2011 grants were made to first-time Foundation grantees. We were also able to make a first-time ever "Super Grant" of \$10,000 to the Domestic Violence Legal Empowerment and Appeals Project, DV LEAP.

Because of the great work of our grants committee and the entire board, I am proud to say that our grants continue to be a solid reflection on both the Foundation and on the WBA.

While there is much good news to report, there is still much to accomplish and that is why we are in the midst of a long range planning process. The next major step in that process is a two-day meeting in August to plan the future of the Foundation and its impact on our community. To help us in this process, we are conducting an electronic survey of all WBA members and other stakeholders to better understand what you see as the needs in our community which the foundation should be addressing. The survey will include a range of questions about personal and professional interests and our grant making. When you receive an invitation to participate in the survey, please make the time to complete it. Your responses matter and will be invaluable in our planning for next year and beyond.

Finally, I want to remind you about our "**Uniting for Justice**" campaign. If you have attended any Foundation events over the past year, you will have heard about this fundraising and outreach campaign designed to strengthen our grant making capabilities and broaden our reach in the community. We hope you will consider **making a gift** to the WBAF and "Uniting for Justice."

I know many of you make time in your busy personal and professional lives to provide pro bono legal services, and for that we are truly grateful. But if your practice does not accommodate that, or if you'd like to find a way to do more, supporting the WBAF is a great way to give back to our community, which we know so badly needs all of the resources we can spare. To those of you **who have already made a contribution** to the Uniting for Justice Campaign, I thank you for your generosity.

I also thank you for your help with the member survey and am looking forward to the responses. Together, I know we will do great things in the coming year.

Regards,
Tracy-Gene G. Durkin
2010-2012 WBA Foundation President

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WBAF 2010-2011 Donors

Supporters of the Women's Bar Association Foundation's Uniting for Justice campaign are agents of change. WBAF puts these gifts to work to support women and girls in our community. We deeply appreciate the investment, and recognize the following contributors to the WBAF:

Guardian \$10,000 - \$24,999

Sterne Kessler Goldstein & Fox PLLC

Patron \$2,500 - \$4,999

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WBA Foundation 2011-2012 Board of Directors

The WBA Foundation (WBAF) has announced its 2011-2012 Board of Directors. Board members are voted on by the WBAF Board and approved by the WBA Board. The 2011-2012 officers were elected at the WBAF's June Board meeting.

The WBAF's new Board members are:

Kelly V. Brinkley, DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education
Ama Romaine, Hilton Worldwide, Inc.

James Sandman, Legal Services Corporation
Carolyn P. Stennett, National Head Start Association

The 2011-2012 officers are:

President

Tracy-Gene G. Durkin, Sterne, Kessler, Goldstein & Fox P.L.L.C.

Vice President

Kirra L. Jarratt, American Bar Association

Treasurer

Linda M. Jackson, Venable LLP

Secretary

Amy Bess, Vedder Price P.C.

Returning Board members are:

Barbara Burr, Burr Law Firm

Kathleen Gunning, Government Counsel

Lorna Kent, American Society for Microbiology

Karen M. Lockwood, The Lockwood Group, LLC

Lorelie S. Masters, Jenner & Block LLP

Liz Medaglia, U.S. Department of Labor

Diana M. Savit, Savit & Szymkowicz, LLP, continues to serve as an ex officio member of the Board, as Immediate Past President. **Laura Possessky**, Gura & Possessky, PLLC, also serves in an ex officio capacity on the Board, as the WBA Board Liaison.

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Women's Bar Association
2020 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Suite 446
Washington, DC 20006
www.wbadc.org | admin@wbadc.org
202-639-8880 | 202-639-8889 fax