

## NYWBA FOUNDATION SEEKS SUPPORT FOR ANNUAL GIVING CLUB

*By Katherine Posner*

As I prepared for a Foundation Board of Directors meeting recently, I could not help but think of all we had accomplished during the past couple of years. Each year we seem to grow, in both size and scope, but this year we had undertaken some daring new projects, and to be honest there were times when I kept my fingers crossed.

The Foundation was initiated in 1995, with a stated mission to eliminate gender bias and other forms of discrimination from the legal system and legal professions, promote the social and economic equality, safety and well-being of women and children, and address the unmet legal needs of women and children.

We were accomplishing that mission reasonably well, through the check-off donation opportunity on the Association's membership form, the revenue from our fully-subscribed Breakfast Speakers Series, and other individual donations that were made from time to time. This allowed us to fund the \$3,600 required for Foundation Internships at Columbia, NYU, and Fordham, and make grants to the various Association committees that submit applications. In addition, we have also funded several outside programs such as Take our Children to Work Day, and Children's PressLine's project to interview juvenile offenders on Death Row.

It was just last spring when the Foundation's Development Committee made a presentation to the Board regarding possible future fundraising approaches. After some discussion regarding the amount of work involved, the lack of staff, the initial start-up costs, donor gifts versus no donor gifts, and our chances of success, the Board enthusiastically agreed to move forward with the Annual Giving Club, although, I think at least a few of us went home a bit nervous.

A mailing went out in December, and the initial effort has proven very successful. By the end of February, a total of \$7,525 had been donated from this effort alone. This does not include donations from newsletter coupons, membership check-off, Breakfast Series admissions, or related donations, and any sales profits from books. This compares to donations from the check-off on membership forms, for the entire fiscal year May '03 to June '04 of \$4,812. For the FY May '02 to June '03, the total in donations was \$3,265.

On behalf of the Board, I want to thank everyone who has made an inaugural donation to the Annual Giving Club. You have provided the funds necessary for us to expand our reach in helping women and children who need a voice in issues pertaining to equality and the law.

While we are all very pleased that the individual gifts are greater in value than in the past -- the mailing resulted in 3 gifts of \$1000 each -- the one area that needs to be improved is the number of donors. It still represents a very small percentage of our constituents stepping up to help.

The second phase of the Annual Fund Drive for this fiscal year will take place over the next six weeks or so. If you have already made your gift or pledge, please accept our thanks. If not, you should be watching the mail for our request to join us as we continue to enhance our efforts to support the Association in providing quality programs for all members, as well as to continue fulfilling our own mission. I want to thank my secretary, Tonya Gaetan, for all her hard work in making all these mailings happen, and for developing and maintaining a very useful database. I also want to thank the Foundation Board for their own donations (they are all charter Giving Club members) and for their ingenuity and devotion to our cause.

If you have any questions, or would like to discuss a major gift of cash or securities, please call me at 212-490-9100 or e-mail me at [kposner@condonlaw.com](mailto:kposner@condonlaw.com) for additional information.

Your Foundation Board has worked hard this year, and the proof is in the excellent programming, the increased dollars raised, and esteem in which the Foundation is held. Watch for your appeal, the second in our new giving club structure and join us as we make a difference!

*The New York Women's Bar Association Foundation, Inc., is a § 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charitable organization.*