

On June 27, 2007, the Supreme Court, New York County, courtesy of Justice Silberman, hosted a beautiful and well-attended reception to kick off the New York Women's Bar Association's Matrimonial *Pro Bono* plan.

Created by Patricia Ann Fersch, of the Patricia Ann Fersch Family Law Center, the plan will permit indigent litigants in the matrimonial field to have qualified representation for 25 hours of the attorney's time. A carefully crafted retainer agreement, pursuant to which the order of appointment is made, permits the attorney to resign after the 25 hours if she or he so wishes.

Justice Silberman, whose welcome remarks included a glowing attribution to our Association and particularly the Matrimonial Law Committee, chaired by Judy White and Randi Isaacs, explained how the plan will work. The matrimonial judges, each of whom was at the reception, will not use the plan to provide representation to litigants who can afford their own, or who simply choose not to be represented. Instead, only truly indigent litigants who have no other resources will be provided with *pro bono* counsel. Presently, court appointments under the Judiciary Law and the County Law are only available for adults who are litigants in Order of Protection and Custody/Visitation matters. This plan will permit litigants to have competent counsel for all facets of the divorce, including grounds, equitable distribution, and support.

Particular thanks for their hard work and vision goes to Patricia Fersch, Judy White, Randi Isaacs, Justice Silberman, Justice Drager and Justice Lobis, all of whom are members of our organization. The firm of Ira E. Garr, P.C., sponsored the generous reception. For information about signing up to volunteer, please contact Judy White at: [judy@iraegarr.com](mailto:judy@iraegarr.com).