

NYWBA Foundation Fellow Interned at Legal Aid Society *By Inna Zaychik*

Having emigrated from Ukraine just eight years ago, I was pleased to receive a remarkable opportunity from the New York Women's Bar Association Foundation (NYWBAF): a fellowship to work at the Immigration Unit of the Legal Aid Society of New York ("Legal Aid"). Due to the fellowship, I was able to spend the summer between my first and second years at Columbia Law School interning at Legal Aid.

My summer experience served as a compelling affirmation of my strong belief that law is not just an abstract set of rules devoid of any human context, but a rather powerful instrument of change affecting every aspect of life on a deeply personal level. A single provision of the immigration law can determine whether a nineteen-year-old who lost his father in the World Trade Center bombings can ever reunite with his mother in Guyana. Immigration law dictates whether an undocumented mother of four who lived in the United States for over twenty years will be forced to leave her entire family behind and return to her home country for at least ten years before returning. The law in this area governs whether an abused Guatemalan woman must return to her violent husband to avoid jeopardizing her immigration status.

It was important to me not only to learn more about the issues facing immigrant communities today, but also to work for an organization devoted to improving protections and opportunities for immigrants under federal laws. Legal Aid is the largest direct provider of legal services for low-income families in New York City. The Immigration Unit was established at the turn of the last century to provide a wide array of critical services to the immigrant community. The recipients of these services frequently include the most vulnerable -- abused women and their children and those seeking asylum from persecution in their birth countries.

My internship experience was particularly memorable and rewarding because of the level of responsibility with which I was entrusted from the very first day. As soon as I arrived, I began working directly with clients to assist them with asylum petitions, permanent residence applications, relative petitions, naturalization and citizen applications, and employment authorization documentation. Throughout my internship, I helped the Immigration Unit's attorneys during client intake meetings. Extensive day-to-day client interaction was crucial to forging my better understanding of the law and contributed enormously to my personal and professional growth.

I gained valuable legal experience drafting a variety of court documents and conducting research on immigration law. I drafted affidavits, motions of adjournment, changes of venue, and requests for evidence responses. I prepared exhibits for submission to New York City Immigration Court and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. I was often assigned to research federal law and draft legal memoranda. Topics included the availability of relief from removal under the provisions of the U.S. Violence Against Women Act and the U.N. Convention Against Torture, the possible grounds for inadmissibility and deportability

TRUSTS & ESTATES COMMITTEE DISCUSSES SUPPLEMENTAL NEEDS TRUSTS

The Trusts & Estates Committee held an interesting and informative meeting on December 6, 2004, at Fulbright & Jaworski. Attorney Jay Sangerman addressed the group about Supplemental Needs Trusts (SNTs). He used a Power-Point presentation with eye-catching graphics to give a dynamic explanation about SNTs and promote a group discussion.

He explained that SNTs are often used in estate planning for disabled clients, preserving their eligibility for government benefits to cover the high cost of medical care. Jay told the group about first-party SNTs, which utilize disabled clients' own funds. He contrasted this with third-party SNTs, which utilize third-party assets such as those of relatives or those available through wills. He explained that different rules apply for first-party SNTs and third-party SNTs, and he demonstrated that the creation, administration, and ramifications of SNTs can be quite intricate. The discussion spanned the areas of estate planning, will drafting, testamentary trusts, elder law, guardianship, and techniques for dealing with Medicaid administrators and the Social Security Administration.

Virtually all seats in the conference room were filled for the presentation, and attendees asked many questions. The group's consensus at the end was that Jay had taught a great deal, and that the presentation and lesson were extremely enjoyable. After the meeting, several members continued to discuss the ramifications of SNTs.

The Trusts & Estates Committee invites all interested NYWBA members to join the Committee and receive notice of future meetings. The Committee is co-chaired by Leona Beane, Loretta Ippolito, and Corinne Marcus.

~ Leona Beane



under the U.S. Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), and requirements for adjustment of status under the "registry" provision of the INA and various legalization programs.

I am truly honored to be a recipient of a NYWBAF Fellowship and for the opportunity to make a personal contribution to the dissemination of information and protection of individual rights among immigrant communities. The experiences of this past summer will undoubtedly have a unique impact on the rest of my legal career and on many of the personal and professional choices I will face in the future.

NYWBA Foundation Sponsored Children's PressLine to Interview Juveniles on Death Row

The U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments in October on the constitutionality of juvenile executions. The United States is one of the few countries that executes offenders for crimes committed as minors. The American Bar Association, 48 countries, and 18 Nobel Peace Prize winners have spoken out against this practice. The New York Women's Bar Association Foundation, Inc. recently awarded a grant to the Children's PressLine that made it possible for the young journalists to travel to Livingston, Texas, to interview two of the 72 juvenile offenders on death row in the U.S. Both executions have been stayed until a decision is made in the Supreme Court case, Roper v. Simmons. The following is a press release issued by Children's PressLine about the trip to Texas and the two juvenile offenders awaiting execution (reprinted with permission).

Children's PressLine Editor Nily Rozic, 18, conducted interviews with two inmates on death row in Livingston, Texas in June 2004. Both inmates, Randy "Abdullah" Arroyo and Nanon Williams, were convicted of capital murder and sentenced to death for crimes committed when they were 17 years old.

Rozic and Children's PressLine Editorial Director Katina Paron traveled to Texas to talk to inmates about their experiences of being a kid on death row.

In March 1997, Arroyo was involved in the carjacking and murder of 39-year-old Air Force Capt. Jose Cobo. According to police reports, while Arroyo drove the stolen car, his accomplice, Vincent Gutierrez, shot Cobo twice in the back and dumped his body into traffic. Thirteen months later, through the state's "law of parties" statute, Arroyo was sentenced to death for Cobo's murder.

During his interview, Arroyo discussed his childhood, the prospect of facing death and the execution of juvenile offenders in America.

"Many times people tell you the pain will heal, the pain will heal," Arroyo said about losing his mother and subsequently going to prison. "And you know, I've come to understand that that's not the case at all. The pain stays. You just learn to deal with it better. You know, it never leaves you. But you try to deal with it. It's kinda like coming to death row."

Like Arroyo, Nanon McKewn Williams grew up without parental guidance and devoid of community support. With his mother in prison and his father dead from a drug deal gone bad by the time he was 7 years old, William wanted to put food on the table for his family by selling drugs on the streets of Los Angeles.

In his interview with Children's PressLine, Williams talked about his strong relationship with his mother, the Supreme Court's review of juvenile executions and youth violence.

NOTES ON MEMBERS

NYWBA congratulates the **Hon. Milagros Matos**, who was sworn in as a Civil Court Judge in New York County on December 9, 2004. Judge Matos has served as an NYWBA director since 2000.

Congratulations to member **Tracey Levy** and her husband Evan on the birth of their baby boy, Benjamin Naphtali Levy, on June 30, 2004. Best wishes can be sent to the Levys c/o Proskauer Rose LLP, 1585 Broadway, New York, NY 10036. Welcome, Benjamin!

HAVE YOU RENEWED YOUR NYWBA MEMBERSHIP? DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR COLLEAGUE WHO WOULD ENJOY BEING AN NYWBA MEMBER?

Our annual membership drive is in full swing! As of December 30th, nearly three-quarters of our members from last year had already renewed, but if you are not one of them, **we miss you!**

Renewal forms were mailed to members in August and October. If you can't find yours, or would like to help a friend or colleague join, just go to our website (www.nywba.org) and download a membership form. It's easy and fast -- you can even fax your membership and credit card information to our Executive Director. You can also tell us what Committees you would like to join, whether you want to be a mentor, whether your contact information has changed, etc.

(Don't remember if you renewed? Just send a note to info@nywba.org or call 212-360-7055.)

Members who have already renewed know *the Association is only as strong as our members*. For the rest of you, be sure your membership is current. **Please join or renew today!**

"Kids fall to pressure," he said. "For the fear of being seen as a coward stops them from standing up for themselves. Nothing changes the fact that kids are kids. And kids make mistakes but kids change. If you say kids don't change, you erase their potential."

Children's PressLine's interviews with Arroyo and Williams are the organization's second pieces aimed at addressing the topic of juvenile offenders on death row. In August 2002, Children's PressLine reporters interviewed juvenile offender Toronto Patterson two weeks before his execution.

Children's PressLine's interviews with death row inmates in Texas were funded, in part, by a grant through the New York Women's Bar Association Foundation, Inc. For more information, visit www.nywba.org.

New York State Lawyer Assistance Trust Helps Attorneys with Alcohol and Substance Abuse Problems

On September 18, 2004, the Hon. Sarah L. Krauss addressed a statewide WBASNY Board meeting at Proskauer Rose LLP to speak about the New York State Lawyer Assistance Trust ("LAT"). Judge Krauss serves on the Civil Court in Kings County and is a Brooklyn Women's Bar Association member, in addition to being a trustee of LAT. NYWBA is providing information about LAT to increase awareness about LAT's mission of helping attorneys with alcohol and substance abuse dependency.

Judge Krauss explained that LAT was created by Chief Judge Judith Kaye and the Court of Appeals in November 2001 to address alcohol and substance abuse in the legal profession. LAT provides statewide leadership and financial assistance to programs for the treatment and prevention of alcohol and substance dependency among lawyers, judges, and law students. Its goals are to encourage the development of new lawyer assistance programs, to educate about alcoholism and substance abuse and their effect on the profession, and to sponsor and promote research in the field. LAT is funded through biennial attorney registration fees.

LAT was created through a key recommendation of the Commission on Alcohol and Substance Abuse in the Profession, which was formed by Chief Judge Kaye in 1999 to find ways to assist lawyers and judges with alcohol and substance abuse problems and to protect the public trust from breaches by addicted members of the profession. According to the Commission's Action Plan, at page 4, "[t]housands of people in New York's legal community are suffering from the effects of alcohol or substance dependency. . . . These diseases cause enormous personal suffering to those who are afflicted and to their families, friends and colleagues. They also pose obvious and documented risks to law clients and to the general public. These are chronic diseases, not moral deficiencies. They are medically treatable diseases, and, with early intervention, the consequences otherwise manifested may be prevented and controlled."

Judge Krauss stated that substance abuse affects 10% of the general population, but it is higher among lawyers - 18%. Those with substance abuse problems tend to hide the problem, or hide themselves, to avoid detection. She encouraged attorneys with substance abuse problems to come forward to seek help. She also briefly described the process by which a person in the legal community could attempt to obtain help for a colleague or friend with an addiction. Judge Krauss stated that she was available as a contact person in the downstate area. She also named Eileen Travis, Director of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York's Lawyer Assistance Program, as a resource. (See contact information at right.)

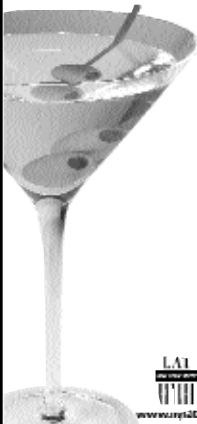
LAT works closely with the lawyer assistance programs sponsored by the New York State Bar Association, the Association of the Bar of the City of New York, and the Nassau County Bar Association, which have licensed professionals who perform drug and alcohol assessments, interventions, and referrals to treatment. A network of eleven lawyer-helping-lawyer committees across the state provide local support as well. Any communications with LAT, the lawyer assistance programs, or the lawyer assistance committee volunteers are confidential, pursuant to New York State Judiciary Law Section 499.

In its brief tenure, LAT has undertaken such projects as adding an informative insert to the attorney registration packet received by each attorney licensed in New York; publishing a quarterly newsletter that highlights events, projects, and people of interest; developing and publicizing several advertisements that have been published in legal periodicals; mailing an informational bulletin to solo and small-firm practitioners across the State; sponsoring continuing legal education events; and administering a grant program which has distributed thousands of dollars to bar association foundations to enhance lawyer assistance services. In law school outreach, LAT coordinated a northeastern U.S. law school conference held in 2003 in New York City and is completing work on its "Course in a Box," a core curriculum for use in professional responsibility courses at law schools. The Course in a Box provides information on alcoholism, substance abuse, stress, and mental health issues. LAT's latest project is the development of two brief videos for use at CLE events and other attorney programs, based on interviews with attorneys who tell their personal stories of struggle with addiction and the road to recovery, and interviews with colleagues and family members who have dealt with alcoholic and addicted attorneys and helped them find lawyer assistance services. In addition, LAT has been instrumental in recommending the adoption of changes in court rules governing the disciplinary process, which under certain circumstances permit an attorney with alcohol or substance abuse problems to be diverted to a monitoring program. If the attorney successfully completes the monitoring program, related disciplinary charges may be dropped. To date, two of the State's four Appellate Divisions have adopted such rules.

NYWBA applauds Lawyer Assistance Trust for this important effort. We encourage attorneys who may have a problem with alcohol or drugs, or who have a colleague, friend or family member with a problem, to reach out to LAT. For more information, please go to LAT's website at www.nylat.org.

MAKE A MOTION FOR HELP

Confidential services for alcohol and substance abuse are available.




Addiction isn't easy to admit, there's a stigma, it's a secret, and when you think you're alone, you're not. Asking for help can be difficult. Knowing help is available makes it a little easier.

When dealing with addiction, at least among the ranks of judges and attorneys is crucial. LAT's affiliate offers free, confidential help in these areas: legal community support from alcohol or substance abuse.

For help, or to help another, please call one of the agencies below:

**New York State Bar Association
Lawyer Assistance Program
800 295 2929
www.nybade.org**

**Association of the Bar of the City of New York
Lawyer Assistance Program
212 382 5787
www.abcnyc.org**


www.nylat.org

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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With their generous contributions, our 2004-05 sustaining members make it possible for us to accomplish so much more. We honor and thank them for their support:

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SAVE THE DATE!

WBASNY 2005 CONVENTION *in Cooperstown*

The Otesaga Resort Hotel, Cooperstown, NY
See hotel photos and information at www.otesaga.com

May 13-15, 2005

Come celebrate WBASNY's 25th Anniversary!

Sponsorships by you and your colleagues (firms, companies, clients, vendors) are welcomed now. Please contact Elizabeth A. Bryson at 212-576-5738 or president@nywba.org with names of potential sponsors or vendors. NYWBA members always have a great time at convention. Please plan to join us!



The Real Estate Committees of the NEW YORK WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION and WESTCHESTER WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION

Present

Representing a Client in a Cooperative Transaction

January 20, 2005

Light Dinner 5:30 p.m.; Program 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
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CLE - 2 Hours of Professional Practice Credits*
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NYWBA CAREER SUCCESS STORY

The NYWBA Success Stories column is a forum for members to share stories and successes in their lives that occurred because of their membership or participation. The fifth in our series is a Career Success Story contributed by member Kay Marmorek:

When I joined the NYWBA, I worked as a waitress in a lovely restaurant. I may have waited tables, but, in reality, I was waiting for the next clue to finding an interesting legal career. Even though I had been on law review in law school and had worked at several legal jobs as an intern over the years, I was having difficulty making the leap to the legal career for which I had studied. I was interested in various areas and aspects of law but did not have a specific focus.

I had joined the NYWBA not long after being admitted in New York. Although I thought it was important to support a bar association focused on helping women in the legal profession, I had never personally felt the need for this special support. I just knew that such an organization had to be a good idea. Unexpectedly, the unique support offered by the Association helped me identify my own career.

Although I was receiving literature about events from the NYWBA, at first I was not going to any meetings or receptions. One weekend, on the spur of the moment, I decided to go to a NYWBA sponsored conference. I thought that getting out of my routine and actually taking the step to talk to other women lawyers and hear about the kinds of work they do might help me decide what I would like to do.

The conference turned out to be all that I had expected and more. I met some very interesting people and had the opportunity to chat with attorneys working in a variety of fields. One of those with whom I chatted at length turned out to be a judge in Manhattan. Although she already had a court attorney, she invited me to visit her office sometime. I did not know what a court attorney does. Nonetheless, I dressed up in my best lawyer clothes and visited the judge. The judge was very kind and suggested that I use her name and send a résumé to the administrative judge of the court. Not long afterwards, I not only had an interview, but I was actually hired to work as a court attorney.

My decision to avail myself of the special support of the NYWBA, which I had not thought about before, made a tremendous difference in my life. Except for a few short breaks, I have been a court attorney in the New York State Court System ever since. I have served as a court attorney in the Bronx and in Manhattan. Over the years this position has been extraordinarily fulfilling, as well as presenting some unique challenges.

My active involvement with the Association has now continued for over twenty years. I am currently serving a second term as the Co-Chair of the Technology and the Internet for Lawyers Committee, and last year I became a member of the NYWBA Board of Directors. My legal career has been very important for me, as has the women's bar. If not for the NYWBA and meeting that wonderful judge at a women's bar conference years ago, I might have missed the opportunity to have this wonderful career.

~ Kay

To submit your own Success Story, call 212-878-3003 or send an email to newsletter@nywba.org.

President's Message continued from page 1

other concerns, and in February 2004, the WBASNY Board adopted our proposed comments, which were then submitted to the Commission and OCA.

Over the summer, the Commission issued its final report, and I am thrilled to inform you that in virtually every detail, the Commission heard our concerns and made specific, concrete changes to address them. Gone was the mandatory recusal language, along with the requirement that attorneys somehow be aware of contributions made by others to judges' campaigns at any time over a period of years.

As exciting, the New York State Assembly and the Office of Court Administration have drafted proposed legislation and rules that incorporate most of the ideas that we recommended. At its Board meeting in late November, WBASNY reconstituted the Task Force, which I was honored to again chair, to review the new proposals. Our first project was to review OCA's the proposed revisions to the Rules Governing Judicial Conduct, including amendments to Part 100 and the creation of a new Part 150. That mission was completed on December 22nd, when the WBASNY Executive Committee adopted and submitted our recommendations to OCA. We will discuss the comments in a future issue, but the proposed rules are a huge improvement over the original proposals. A number of potential problems remain, however, including a possible challenge to the rules under the U.S. Voting Rights Act and a variety of implementation issues.

The Task Force is now turning to its second project - reviewing two proposed bills before the state legislature. While our review is ongoing, I am pleased that the bills specifically identify WBASNY as one of the organizations that must be allowed to participate in the review of candidates for judicial office across the state. This is an enormous honor and vote of confidence, since the only other bar associations mentioned are the New York State Bar Association and the Association of the Bar of the City of New York. We look forward to working with the WBASNY Legislation Committee on the review of these bills.

Coming across my original application has also been a reminder of the importance of membership. As you know, our membership year is measured from June 1 to May 31. There is another date that is crucial, however, and that is January 31 - when "certify" our membership for purposes of determining the number of WBASNY delegates we will have next year and the number of votes we will have this year on the Nominations Committee (which decides on the nominees for next year's WBASNY officers). If you have not yet renewed your membership, please do so as soon as possible before January 31st. If you know someone who would like to join, now is the perfect time, since new members can join in January for half-price!

I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season. A great way to start out the year is by attending our terrific events, including our Reception to Honor Newly-Elected and Appointed Judges on January 20th; our new "Lunch with a Judge" program, which kicks off with Justice Laura Drager on January 6th; the real estate program on January 20th; or our NYWBA "Night at the Theatre" on January 13th. Happy New Year!



WEB CITES

This month continues our coverage of personal injury sites and resources on the web.

It is always a challenge to find competent expert witnesses. A directory of expert witnesses is available at <http://www.JurisPro.com>. Search for experts by keyword at <http://www.expertwitness.com>. For a New York specific directory of expert witnesses, go to MoreLaw at <http://www.morelaw.com/experts/newyork/index2.asp>.

The Daubert Tracker at <http://www.dauberttracker.com> offers - for a fee - the "gatekeeping history" of experts, with a database of free evidentiary "gatekeeping" decisions from multiple jurisdictions, along with briefs, docket sheets, and related material.

For private investigators, legal nurse consultants, and litigation support services, see <http://www.expertlaw.com>.

For data on the weather (particularly useful in accident cases), start with the government's National Climatic Data Center, the world's largest archive of climate data, at <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/ncdc.html>. For fee-based forensic weather data, including meteorological history and analysis, you can go to <http://www.weatherclaims.com>, <http://www.weatherconsultants.com>, or <http://www.compuweather.com>.

Remember that you can use search-engines such as <http://www.google.com>, <http://www.altavista.com>, and <http://www.webcrawler.com>. You can also visit websites for legal professionals, such as <http://www.findlaw.com> and <http://www.law.cornell.edu>.

Please send comments and suggested websites to techcolumn@nywba.org. We appreciate your contributions.

~ Eleanor Vale

We intend this as a service to our members. As with all research tools, you should use your judgment in assessing the accuracy and completeness of the information you find on the Internet.

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

ASSOCIATE POSITION AVAILABLE IN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PRACTICE GROUP

Long Island office of a major national labor and employment law firm with a large, busy affirmative action practice seeks highly motivated associate with a minimum of 2 years experience, concentrating in employment law. Candidate must possess strong verbal and written communications skills. Experience with affirmative action plan preparation and counseling a plus. Firm offers excellent, comprehensive benefits package and salary commensurate with experience. Applicants only, please.

Please respond by emailing or faxing resume and salary requirements. Equal Opportunity Employer.

E-Mail: longisland@jacksonlewis.com
Fax: (631) 247-0417 (Attn: Gail)

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

The **Technology and Internet for Lawyers Committee** will meet on **Tuesday, January 11, at 6:15 p.m.** at the offices of NYWBA President Beth Bryson, New York Life, 44 East 27th Street (between Park and Madison Avenues). After you check in with the Security Desk, you will be directed across the street to the "North Building, Room 352." (NOTE NEW LOCATION.) New members are welcome. Light refreshments will be served. For information or to RSVP, please contact Co-Chair Kay Marmorek at (212) 748-5967 or til@nywba.org. Please also save the date for the next TIL meeting, which will be held on Thursday, February 17, at 6:15 p.m.

To accommodate the NYWBA's Judge's Reception, the **Matrimonial and Family Law Committee** is moving its January meeting to a future date (to be announced). The topic will be "Bankruptcy Issues for Matrimonial and Other State Court Practitioners." Member Bonnie Gallet created the program and will moderate a panel of Bankruptcy Judges. All NYWBA members are welcome. Contact Jo Ann Douglas (k9kastle@aol.com or 212-673-2895) for details or look for the announcement in next month's newsletter.

The **Working Mothers Committee** is planning a brown-bag lunch for **March 2005**. Guest speaker Jeffrey Brecher, an employment attorney, will make a presentation on negotiating and drafting flextime arrangements. New members are welcome. Contact Co-Chair Christine Harman (212-578-7647 or charman@metlife.com) or Allison Brecher (212-345-9286 or Allison.L.Brecher@mmc.com) for details or look for the announcement in next month's newsletter.

NOTICE TO MEMBERS

NYWBA WEBSITE PASSWORD TO CHANGE IN JANUARY 2005

The NYWBA Website (www.nywba.org) has many helpful features that are open to anyone -- from information about the Association, to upcoming events and CLE programs, to information about Committees, to excerpts from the Newsletter.

The website also has "members only" sections, where you can access the full Newsletter, obtain contact information for Officers, Directors and Committee Chairs, and find other helpful information. If you are a member and need the user name or password, just send a note to "info@nywba.org" or call **212-360-7055**.

NOTICE: The password for the "members only" sections of the NYWBA website will be changed in January 2005. Only members who have renewed their membership for 2004-05 will receive the new password and continue to have access to the latest Women's Bar news and events, so be sure to renew as soon as possible. Not sure if you have already renewed? Just send us a note or call (info@nywba.org or 212-360-7055), and we'll let you know.

Newsletter Deadline and Contact Information

Submissions must be sent to the Newsletter Committee by the **10th** of the month for publication in the following month's newsletter. Please e-mail articles, notes on members, committee calendars, and any other announcements to **Teresa Schiller, Esq.**, tel. no. 212-878-3003, email newsletter@nywba.org.

NYWBA List Serve

The NYWBA List Serve provides up-to-the-moment information concerning events, programs, and job announcements through email. Please email us at info@nywba.org if you have an announcement you would like to post on the list serve or if you would like to be added to the list serve.

Have you changed your address, firm, phone number or other information? Please call 212-360-7055 or send an e-mail to "info@nywba.org" with the updated information. This will help us keep you informed and our records up-to-date.

JOIN US FOR A NIGHT AT THE THEATRE!

NYWBA Members Night at

"Menopause the Musical"

A celebration of women, by women, and for women. The music is great fun, the lyrics clever, the theme . . . well, universal, and no one will look at you strangely when you ask them to turn up the A/C.

Thursday, January 13, 2005 at 8 p.m.

Tickets for NYWBA members and guests are only \$50.50

Reserve your seat(s) by December 20, 2004, by mailing a check, payable to the New York Women's Bar Association, to Jo Ann Douglas, 170 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10003.

Questions? Send an e-mail to K9Kastle@aol.com or call 212-360-7055.

Visit our website at www.nywba.org

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*invites you to join us in honoring the
Newly-elected and Appointed
Judges of New York County*

*at a Cocktail Reception at
The Columbus Citizens House
8 East 69th Street, NYC
(between Madison and Fifth Avenues)*

**Thursday, January 20, 2005
6:30 to 8:30 p.m.**

*\$80 in advance; \$95 at the door
RSVP Required
(RSVP & payment must be received by
January 17 for the "in advance" price)*

To RSVP or for more information,
contact Executive Director Marta Toro
(212-360-7055 or info@nywba.org).

NEW YORK WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION

presents

Lunch with a Judge

featuring

Hon. Laura Drager

Acting Supreme Court Justice and NYWBA Board Member

Thursday, January 6, 2005, at 1:00 p.m.
Matrimonial Part 31, Courtroom 684
111 Centre Street
New York, NY

Space is limited to 15 attorneys,
and advance registration is required.

To reserve a seat or obtain more information,
please send an e-mail to info@nywba.org
or call 212-360-7055.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**ENSURING THE QUALIFICATIONS
AND INTEGRITY OF THE JUDICIARY**

I recently came across my original NYWBA membership application, from my first year in law school. Women constituted one-third of my class, but there were few women tenured professors at law schools, partners at law firms, or serving as judges. Tremendous progress has been made, but one of the accomplishments that we can take the most pride in is the huge increase in the number of women sitting on the state and federal bench. At least in this part of the state, women jurists sit on every court and handle every type of matter. Indeed, the majority of the judges on the New York Court of Appeals are women. Not coincidentally, many of the women who have become judges over the years have been active members of the women's bar.

One of the great lights in this regard is our long-time member and past NYWBA President, the Honorable Betty Weinberg Ellerin, Justice of the Appellate Division, First Department, who was honored at the gala celebration of WBASNY's 25th Anniversary in December. WBASNY presented her with the inaugural "Betty Weinberg Ellerin Mentoring Award" at the event, which was held at the New York Botanical Garden. WBASNY President Mindy Zlotogura, Chief Judge Judith Kaye, and many other judges praised Justice Ellerin for her extraordinary accomplishments as a jurist and mentor, and as a true friend to all women attorneys and judges. I am thrilled that the event was such a wonderful success and that we had an opportunity to honor and thank Justice Ellerin, who has always "been there" for so many of us.

Speaking of judges, I have had several occasions over the past two years to consider New York State's process for selecting judges. Last year, after the Commission to Promote Confidence in Judicial Elections issued its "interim report," I was honored to be selected by WBASNY to head a Task Force of chapter presidents to review the Commission's proposals. The initial proposals were presented in good faith, but there were many serious problems with them, including that judges could be required to recuse themselves if their election campaigns had received a cumulative total of \$500 or more from any lawyer appearing before them, or from the lawyer's firm, colleagues, family, etc., even if the lawyer was not aware of the other contributions and there was no actual or apparent conflict for the judge handling the matter. Failure to disclose such contributions could result in a disciplinary action against the lawyer, up to and including disbarment! The Task Force took issue with these and

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Elizabeth A. Bryson

Photo: Daryl-Ann Saunders

Continued on page 2