



NEW YORK WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION

Celebrating Our 75th Year

TOUR OF THE CIVIL COURT OF THE COUNTY OF NEW YORK

Co-Sponsored by
**The New York Women's Bar Association and
The Civil Court of the City of New York**

**Monday, November 16, 2009
9:00AM-1:00PM**

111 Centre Street, NYC
*(enter through White Street;
check in at the 12th Floor Conference Room)*

This dynamic CLE program is intended to benefit attorneys new to the practice, or just new to New York, who will be litigating in the Small Claims, Housing and Civil Courts. It includes an interactive tour of the courthouse and provides a comprehensive overview of the structure of the court and the organization of the clerks' offices, as well as practical information on filing papers and answering calendar calls. Participants are eligible to receive up to 3.5 transitional skills CLE credits.

The tour is free to all members and non-members.
A fee of \$10* will be charged for the CLE credits.

**Space is limited to 30 participants, so register early
by going online to www.nywba.org/civilcourtcle.**

**For more information, send an email to
CLE@nywba.org or call 212-490-8202.**

**Financial Hardship Scholarships: Full and partial scholarships for this program based on financial need are available. For information on the guidelines and to apply, contact Yacine Barry at NYWBA, 132 East 43rd Street, #716, New York, NY 10017-4019 212-490-8202 or info@nywba.org. All requests are confidential.*

For the latest news and information on programs and events, check NYWBA online at www.nywba.org.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

NOVEMBER 2009

Finding Inspiration



Donna M. Praiss

Where do you look for inspiration? Some seek it in a cup of gourmet coffee, a bottle of fine wine, a box of chocolates, a pint of ice cream, maybe all of the above. In just the past couple weeks, I have been inspired repeatedly by New York Women's Bar Association members. Former New York State Chief Judge Judith Kaye inspired me with her perspective on the importance of NYWBA to the past and future of our legal profession at our annual Membership Reception. At a special ceremony in the rotunda at New York Supreme Court, United States Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor inspired me with her humble beginnings, her dedication to family and the profession, and the sincere admiration of her former colleagues and adversaries. And most recently, the memorial service celebrating the long and full life of Judge Florence Perlow Shientag, a founder of the NYWBA, inspired me with her determination and energy to succeed in government and private practice, in New York, Florida, London and Paris, in bar associations and family relations.

When I told a New York Law Journal reporter that Judge Shientag was a very active member of the NYWBA nearly to the end, he asked whether she was my mentor. I confessed that I never met Judge Shientag in person, but I have always been inspired by her refusal to be intimidated. Whether it was responding to bar associations not accepting women attorneys as members or following the edict of the United States Attorney directing that she and other Assistant U.S. Attorneys personally serve subpoenas in potentially dangerous neighborhoods, Judge Shientag found a way to succeed, and she shared it with us.

At each event I attended recently, I had the privilege of speaking with many other inspiring NYWBA members whom I would like to call mentors. What makes them so amazing to me is their accessibility and willingness to give of their time and talents to our Association. Our committee chairs especially are determined to make an impact through their meetings and events. The kickoff meeting for our Mentoring Circles program alone, and apart from the mentoring process that we are embarking upon was energizing and reassuring. The kickoff meeting for our Mentoring Circles Program, as part of the overall mentoring process that we are embarking upon, was energizing and affirming. It was a genuine coming together to support and guide one another in our careers - a spirit that may exist in other bar *Continued on page 2*

2009-2010 NYWBA COMMITTEE CHAIRS

STANDING COMMITTEES

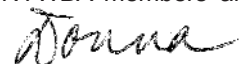
By-Laws and Amendments	Elizabeth A. Bryson
Cooperation with Other	
Bar Associations	Kelly O'Neill Levy
Employment and Equal	
Opportunity for Women	Felice B. Ekelman
	Louis Pechman
Judiciary	TBA
Legislation	Jane Bevans
Membership	Heather K. Leifer
	Jessica A. Ventarola
Professional Ethics and Discipline	Hon. Barbara Jaffe
	Sarah Diane McShea
Programs, Events and	
Arrangements	Diana G. Browne
	Patricia Ann Grant (Annual Dinner)
	Jo Ann Douglas (Annual Dinner)
Publicity / Press	Julie Hyman
	Tamara Lannin

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Advance the Status of	
Women in the Profession	Brenda Pomerance
	Rachel J. Minter
Alternate Dispute Resolution	Andrea Vacca
	Leona Beane
Awards	Amy Saltzman
Business Law, Taxation and Bankruptcy	Cassandra Porter
	Monique McClure
Children's Rights and Issues	Denise Scotto
Continuing Legal Education	Yacine Barry
Criminal Law	Isiris Isaac
Domestic Violence	Amanda Norejko
	Laura A. Russell
Elder Law and Disabilities	Miriam Davidson
	Kay Marmorek
Immigration Law	TBA
Intellectual Property	Maria Palmese
	Marylee Jenkins
	Dana Kaplan Richter
International Law and Practice	Christa M. Bosch
	Rebecca Adams Hollis
Litigation	Kathy M. Lynch
Long Range Planning	Elizabeth A. Bryson
	Myra L. Freed
Matrimonial & Family Law	Briana Denney
	Sophie Jacobi
	Hon. Andrea Masley
Mentoring & Mentoring Circles	Andrea Vacca
	Randy L. Shapiro
Newsletter	Carla P. Vogel
	Anahid ("Annie") Ugurlayan
Privacy & Cyberlaw	Patrice S. Ettinger
Pro Bono	TBA
Real Estate Law	TBA
Reproductive Rights	TBA
Solo and Small Firm Practice	Deborah G. Rosenthal
	Gina Danetti
Students and New Lawyers	Stephanie M. Adduci
	Jane C. Cowles
Summer Program	Cassandra Porter
Technology and the Internet / Website	Elizabeth A. Bryson
	Theresa Widmann

President's Message continued from Page 1

associations but is so prevalent and vital in the NYWBA. Whether you are a member of an NYWBA Mentoring Circle this year or not, I hope you will participate in one of the NYWBA committees so that you too may find inspiration from NYWBA members and enjoy being a lawyer.



The Office of Career Services at the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law invites NYWBA members to participate in the **2009 Practice Area Symposium**. It will be held at the Law School's third floor student lounge, 55 Fifth Avenue (between 12th and 13th Streets), on **Thursday, November 12, 2009 from 6-8 pm**. The Symposium is a unique opportunity for current law students to meet practicing attorneys in an informal setting and learn about a wide range of practice areas and internship opportunities. Please contact NYWBA Students & New Lawyers Committee Chairs at snlchairs@nywba.org if you are interested in participating.

Meet the NYWBA's New Executive Director

We are pleased to announce that Karen Lu is the Association's new Executive Director. In this position, Karen will have a wide range of responsibilities, including:



1. Maintaining our membership database and records, including processing applications and renewals, overseeing member mailings, updating records when members change their contact info or practice areas and notifying WBASNY and the Foundation, and preparing our Membership Certification Reports to WBASNY;
2. Handling incoming correspondence and calls and directing them to the President, Treasurer, Committee Chairs and others, as appropriate;
3. Supporting the Treasurer on financial matters, including recording member transactions and depositing payments from dues, events and programs; and
4. Providing support for major events, such as the Annual Dinner, Judiciary Reception, etc.

Karen is a graduate of Pace University, with a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice, and she serves as the Office Manager of a midtown Manhattan law firm. She is quite familiar with NYWBA, as she has been the graphic designer for our Newsletter and our Annual Dinner Journal for the past 10 years. Karen resides in New Jersey with her husband, Manwai, and their 2-year old daughter, Megan.

Many thanks to Vice President Gretchen Beall Schumann, who chaired the Executive Director Search Committee, and to the members of the Committee, for their diligence in reviewing scores of resumes, conducting multiple rounds of interviews, and their overall efforts to identify the best candidate for this important position.

Committee Chairs Continued

Trusts and Estates	Leona Beane
	Loretta A. Ippolito
Women's Health Issues	TBA
Working Parents	Christine Harman

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Stephanie M. Adduci	Susan K. Matlow
Susan Aufiero	Elizabeth Mattern
Hon. Nancy M. Bannon	Monique McClure
Brittany Banta	Irena Milosavljevic
Carolyn A. Blessing	Karen M. Mitchell
Erin Bohannon	Peter D. Morris
Hon. Noel A. Brennan	Irena Mykyta
Garry Buff	Hae Sung Nam
Tiffany A. Buxton	Kimberley Danzi Overs
Michi Cabrera	Anna Pacca
Moira E. Casey	Vesna Rafaty
Kimberly A. Considine	Melissa Rivero
Marie A. Corliss	Lauren A. Roberts
Gina T. Danetti	Melinda Rodon
Christa D'Angelica	Adrienne Rose
Marilyn Daniels	Suzanne M. Saia
Katie Duke	Remi Flaishman Schwartz
Patrice S. Ettinger	Randi-Lynn Smallheer
Courtney B. Feldman	Jessica Sprague
Magdalena Hanebach	Susan M. Stern
Meredith S. Heller	Allison M. Surcouf
Jocelyn Jacobson	Iuliana Tanase
Jiayi Jiang	Alisa Thatcher
Caryn B. Keppler-Citrin	Kimberlee F. Trigoboff
Lois L. La Londe	Debra Weeks
Grace P. Lee, PhD	Jada West
Gwen J. Lourie	Jing Xu
Allison P. Lurin	Pauline Yedreyeski
Rosalyn Maldonado	

SUSTAINING MEMBERS

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

Elkan Abramowitz	Robert M. Kaufman
Susan L. Bender	Hon. Judith S. Kaye
Laurie Berke-Weiss	Karen Greve Milton
Elizabeth A. Bryson	Peter D. Morris
Mary A. Donovan	Norma Z. Paige
Myrna Felder	Stanley Plesent
Catherine M. Foti	Karen B. Rosenthal
Martha E. Gifford	Carol A. Schragar
Marcia C. Goldstein	Gretchen Beall Schumann
Adria S. Hillman	Hon. Felice K. Shea
Michele A. Katz	Lisa A. Sokoloff

NOTES ON MEMBERS

Has something noteworthy happened to you or another member? Send your news to newsletter@nywba.org.

Former NYWBA President **Lisa A. Sokoloff**, has become associated with the firm of Sills Cummis & Gross, P.C. in New York City, where she'll continue to focus on insurance defense and construction accident litigation.

The NYWBA extends its heartfelt congratulations to **Laurie Berke-Weiss** who will be the co-recipient of the 2010 Judge William Groat Award from Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations, which will be presented at the Pierre Hotel in New York City on April 20, 2010.

COMMITTEE NEWS

The Committee to Advance the Status of Women is preparing to launch its 2009 NYWBA Survey of Manhattan Law Firms. See www.nywba.org/surveyinfo for our 2007 Survey. If you want to help reach out to firms to participate, please contact **Rachel Minter** at (212) 643-0966 or survey@nywba.org. Also, if you are in a firm that has a Manhattan office, please let us know to whom in your firm we should send the survey by sending an email to survey@nywba.org.

Matrimonial & Family Law Committee - The Matrimonial & Family Law Committee meets on the third Wednesday of the month at 6:15 p.m. at the offices of Blank Rome LLP, 405 Lexington Ave., NYC. To RSVP, send an email to Co-Chairs Briana Denney, Sophie Jacobi & Hon. Andrea Masley at M&F@nywba.org, or call Ms. Denney at 212-684-1000.

Other NYWBA Committees - Other Committees also host programs and hold substantive meetings throughout the year, and many are looking for new members. If you are interested in joining a Committee or attending a meeting, contact the appropriate Committee Chair (names and contact information are posted at www.nywba.org/committees), or send a note to info@nywba.org.

The New York Women's Bar Association Foundation, Inc.

Invites you to join us for breakfast

Hon. Judith S. Kaye

Former Chief Judge, State of New York
Of Counsel,
Skadden Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP

Turning Crisis into Opportunity

at

THE CORNELL CLUB - NEW YORK
6 East 44th Street (between Fifth and Madison)
Wednesday, December 2, 2009
8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.
(Space is limited)

RSVP to Kathy Posner at
212-894-6730 or at kposner@condonlaw.com.

*Please bring new children's books to donate to the
NYWBA's Judge Judith S. Kaye's Children's Book Club*

REGULATORY REFORM -- U.S. FINANCIAL SYSTEM

By Carla P. Vogel

President Obama recently issued a white paper titled "Financial Regulatory Reform, A New Foundation: Rebuilding Financial Supervision and Regulation,"¹ outlining his comprehensive plan for regulatory reform designed to address the causes of the recent financial crisis. The Plan requires new legislature and rule changes, most of which have been proposed and are currently pending in one or both houses of Congress. The following summarizes some of the key highlights of the Plan.

Promote robust supervision and regulation of financial firms: The Plan proposes the creation of a Financial Services Oversight Council, chaired by Treasury and composed of the heads of the principal federal financial regulators, to facilitate coordination of policy and resolution of disputes, and to identify emerging risks in firms and market activities. The Plan also calls for all advisers to hedge funds (and other private pools of capital, including private equity funds and venture capital funds) whose assets under management exceed a modest threshold to be required (i) to register with the SEC and (ii) to report information on the funds they manage that is sufficient to assess whether any fund poses a threat to financial stability.

Establish comprehensive supervision of financial markets: The Plan proposes to centralize the current regulatory framework of the CFTC and the SEC for all over-the-counter (OTC) derivatives and asset-backed securities, impose record keeping and reporting requirements on all OTC derivatives, and require all standardized OTC derivative transactions to be executed in regulated and transparent platforms and cleared through regulated central counterparties.

Protect consumers and investors from financial abuse: The Plan proposes the establishment of a single regulatory agency, the Consumer Financial Protection Agency (CFPA), to enhance federal supervision and enforcement and improve coordination with the states. The Plan also proposes new authorities for the Federal Trade Commission and the SEC, calling for new regulations to improve disclosure, raise standards and increase enforcement.

Provide the government with the tools it needs to manage financial crises: The Plan proposes that the government be allowed to address the potential failure of a bank holding company or other nonbank financial firm when the stability of the financial system is at risk. It also proposes that the Federal Reserve Board receive prior written approval from the Secretary of the Treasury for emergency lending under its "unusual and exigent circumstances" authority.

Raise international regulatory standards and improve international cooperation: The Plan proposes that the United States will seek to coordinate international financial policy through the G-20, the Financial Stability Board, and the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision, and focus on reaching international consensus on four core issues: regulatory capital standards; oversight of global financial markets; supervision of internationally active financial firms; and crisis prevention and management.

INTRODUCING THE NYWBA'S NEW LOGO

By Andrea Vacca

In June, the Board of Directors agreed that the New York Women's Bar Association needed a new logo and that it needed it fast. A Committee was formed with the understanding that we would do whatever it took to have a new logo chosen by the end of August and ready to launch by September 14th, the date of our Annual Membership Reception. The Committee, which consisted of President Donna Praiss and Directors Andrea Vacca, Elizabeth Bryson, Julie Hyman and Patricia Grant, immediately got to work to discuss what we wanted a logo to represent. We agreed that the logo should reflect the identity and goals of the NYWBA, which include promoting women in the legal profession in New York City, and particularly in Manhattan. The logo should also evoke the facts that: the majority of our members are modern, working women; we are highly supportive of each other; and our membership spans many generations. We agreed that the design should be clean, modern, and strong.

After soliciting proposals from three different design firms, we selected Rappy & Company, a Manhattan-based design firm. Floyd Rappy, the firm's founder, explained that his goal was to produce a successful logo that was simple, strong and easily identifiable; it would also be sophisticated and would provide our organization with credibility.

Within two weeks, Rappy & Company presented us with six designs in grey scale. Mr. Rappy explained that by presenting the logo without color, it helps to make a decision without the emotional response that colors invoke. One design stood out above the others. After a crash course in logo design, we learned that the contemporary design appealed to us because it had the effect of letters breaking out of a box - not wanting to be contained. The font was classic and strong, and it was neither too masculine nor feminine. The "W" in the organization's initials, which would eventually be highlighted by a single color, would also stand out because it was centered and balanced by the other four initials.

Following a presentation of four different color combinations, the Committee narrowed its choice down to two and at our September Board meeting, the final vote was taken. The favored color combination, as displayed on this Newsletter's front cover, has a distinctive blue background and a "W" highlighted in a golden yellow. Our new logo will be utilized on all NYWBA printed and web materials. Logo pins may also be available.

Thank you to the Committee members who worked under such a time crunch. And thank you to Floyd Rappy and his team at Rappy & Company, who so quickly and expertly designed an image that reflects the mission and membership of the NYWBA.

Andrea Vacca chairs the NYWBA Alternate Dispute Resolution Committee and Co-Chairs the Mentoring Circles Program. She is a certified Family and Divorce Mediator and a Collaborative Law Attorney.

1. June 17, 2009. See, http://www.financialstability.gov/docs/regs/FinalReport_web.pdf.

Carla P. Vogel is a Vice President of the NYWBA and Co-Editor of the Newsletter. She is an Executive Director in the Legal and Compliance Department at Morgan Stanley Investment Management.

Justice Sotomayor Celebration at New York Supreme Court

By Donna M. Praiss

Close friends and colleagues from the US Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, the US District Court for the Southern District of New York and the District Attorney's Office joined Chief Judge Jonathan Lippmann and Governor David Paterson on September 24, 2009 to recognize the achievements of US Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor. Officers from New York Women's Bar Association, Rockland Women's Bar Association, Westchester Women's Bar Association and Women's Bar Association of the State of New York were also on hand to cheer on "one of our own."

Chief Judge Lippmann began the ceremony by recounting highlights of Justice Sotomayor's childhood, education, government and judicial career. Initially motivated by television's Perry Mason to pursue justice in the New York District Attorney's Office and later selected by three different US Presidents to mete out justice on the federal bench, Justice Sotomayor's skill and dedication were lauded by her former boss, Second Circuit Chief Judge Dennis Jacobs. With good humor, Governor Paterson recollected his own childhood passion for the prosecutor in the Perry Mason show and how his career took a very different path from there. Justice Sotomayor thanked everyone for their support and kindness throughout her life and her career.

She was presented with a photograph of Lady Liberty from the façade of the Bronx Supreme Court Building, which she admired as a child growing up in the Bronx. It was her first courthouse memory and a fitting memento of her journey thus far. Immediately following the ceremony, Chief Judge Lippmann escorted Justice Sotomayor through the enthusiastic crowd of well wishers while security agents flanked them on all sides. Although struggling with a cold, Justice Sotomayor embraced her close friends and greeted all with a warm smile. It was a beautiful homecoming for Justice Sotomayor.



*Chief Judge Jonathan Lippmann (l.) and
 US Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor (c.)*

MENTORING CIRCLES KICKOFF

By Andrea Vacca

On October 13, 2009, the NYWBA kicked off its newly revitalized Mentoring Circles program with a reception held in the beautiful new offices of Newsweek, which generously hosted the event. Approximately 43 NYWBA members were in attendance, representing about one-half of our members participating in the program.

President Donna Praiss started the evening by providing an overview of the 15-year history of the NYWBA Mentoring Circles program. While the program has shrunk considerably, two circles are still in existence and self-sustaining. Because mentoring is needed at all stages of a person's career, especially at times of change and transition, and in response to overwhelming member interest, Ms. Praiss encouraged the revitalization of the Mentoring Circles program.

At the kickoff event, Committee Co-Chairs Randy Shapiro and Andrea Vacca explained that a Mentoring Circle is a group of NYWBA members who meet regularly to provide each other with professional support and development. Each circle has 10 to 12 members with different levels of legal experience and represent various practice areas and legal work environments. When a Mentoring Circle is well-balanced, the mentoring and support flows around the entire circle and benefits both mentors and mentees. They underscored that a Mentoring Circle is not a one-on-one mentoring program nor a job search program, although members may find jobs and mentors through their involvement in a Circle.

Former NYWBA President Martha Gifford described in more detail the history of the NYWBA Mentoring Circles program, which was initially developed in 1995 by the Committee for Women in the Profession with the help of a scientific study conducted by a graduate student in the Columbia University School of Social Work. Subsequently, it was featured in the book [The Lawyer's Guide to Mentoring](#), by Ida O. Abbott, Esq. Ms. Gifford explained that a successful circle involves a regular meeting schedule (5 or 6 times a year, if possible) and that each meeting has a designated topic in order to generate focused discussions that interest all members.

Janet Cord, former NYWBA Treasurer and Board member and current Chair of WBASNY's Finance Committee, shared how she benefited from being a member of two Mentoring Circles since the program's inception. Of particular benefit to Ms. Cord was having the opportunity to learn from the perspectives and experiences of other legal professionals in her circle.

Following introductions, the members in attendance were directed to one of eight tables where they introduced themselves to other members of their Circle. Before the event ended, each Circle had chosen a liaison and a date for their first meeting.

The next opportunity to join a Mentoring Circle will be in January 2010. Members who are interested in joining a Circle should send an email to MentoringCircles@NYWBA.org indicating their firm/company name and address, their area of practice and their year of admission to the bar.

See page 7 for photos of the event.

Remembering Honorable Florence Perlow Shientag

- NYWBA Founder and Past President

by Elizabeth A. Bryson and Martha E. Gifford

It is with great sadness that the New York Women's Bar Association reports that our last surviving Founder, Past President Hon. Florence Perlow Shientag, passed away on October 7, 2009.



Hon. Florence Perlow Shientag in the 1940's

Judge Shientag received a Bachelor of Science degree from New York University and her law degree from the New York University School of Law in 1933. She was admitted to practice in New York, Florida and before the U.S. Supreme Court. Judge Shientag began her distinguished career as a Law Secretary to the Honorable Fiorello LaGuardia, Mayor of the City of New York. In 1941, she became a Judge of the Domestic Relations Court. In 1943, she became the first woman appointed as an Assistant United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, serving in the Criminal Division. In 1954, Judge Shientag established a private practice with offices in New York, London and Paris. Among her achievements as a lawyer was the successful argument before the Supreme Court in defense of the publication of "La Ronde" against criminal charges of obscenity. She continued her practice until just a few years ago.

In the 1930's, no bar associations in Manhattan allowed women to be members. In 1934, newly admitted to the bar, Judge Shientag

was one of a handful of women attorneys who formed the New York Women's Bar Association. In 1935, she was a signatory on the Association's Certificate of Incorporation, establishing the NYWBA as a "full service bar association" with the additional stated purpose to "define and elevate the status of women." Judge Shientag served as President of the Association for the 1941-1942 membership year.

Throughout her extraordinary life, Judge Shientag was continuously involved in the activities of the Association, frequently attending Board meetings and reminding the Association of our duty to support women lawyers. Among innumerable contributions of her time and resources, she established scholarship that annually awarded \$5,000, and later \$10,000, to a law student for submission of the most distinguished article on issues of constitutional law, and generously supported the New York Women's Bar Association Foundation, Inc. She noted a few years ago that she had attended the NYWBA's Annual Installation and Awards Dinners and Luncheons nearly every year for more than seventy years. We are grateful beyond words for her pioneering life and for her devotion to the Association.

Donations in Judge Shientag's name may be made to the New York Women's Bar Association Foundation, Inc., 132 East 43rd Street, The Chrysler Building, #716, New York, NY 10017-4019.

Elizabeth A. Bryson is a past President of the NYWBA and a past officer of WBASNY. Martha E. Gifford is a past President of the NYWBA and WBASNY. The authors thank past Presidents Myrna Felder and Barbara A. Ryan for their invaluable contributions.

In 2000, the NYWBA hosted the annual Convention of the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York in Washington, D.C. and honored Judge Florence Perlow Shientag (seated third from the left in the front row). **Seated (l-r):** Past Presidents Angela Tese-Milner, Barbara Ryan, Hon. Florence Perlow Shientag, Hon. Betty Weinberg Ellerin, and past Presidents of both NYWBA and WBASNY Myrna Felder, Joan Ellenbogen, and Martha E. Gifford. **First standing row:** Elizabeth Bryson (Convention Chair, later President), Myra Freed, Naomi Sheiner, Ann Pincess Berman, Hon. Patricia Nuñez (Convention Co-Chair), Tina Sernick (Convention Co-Chair), Lori Segal Oppenheimer, Sandra Modell Hirsch, Lisa Sokoloff (later President), Toby Pilsner (past President), Marian Burnbaum. **Back row:** Hon. Barbara Jaffe, Kay Marmorek, Gerry Fifer, Marjorie Martin, Lisa Bauer, Heather Martínez Zona (later President), Hon. Sherry Klein Heitler, Marcia Goldstein (past President), Christine Harman, Karen Greve Milton (then President).



Florence Perlow Shientag, Assistant United States Attorney in the Southern District of New York, 1952 (seated in front row, second from left), the first woman to serve that capacity. She served as a prosecutor in the Criminal Division.

Record Checking for Matrimonial and Family Court Matters

By *Sophie Jacobi*

On March 24, 2009, amendments to Domestic Relations Law section 240 and Family Court Act section 651 went into effect, requiring that any judge making decisions concerning the custody of, or access to, a child or children have relevant and current information concerning the parties and parties' child(ren) before issuing any order, whether temporary or permanent, regarding custody or access. Prior to the issuance of any order, the court is required to conduct a record check review of the parties and the child(ren) involved in the action from (1) the statewide registry of Orders of Protection, (2) the Sex Offender Registry, and (3) the Family Court child protective records and warrants.

In addition, prior to the issuance of any order affecting custody or access where more than ninety (90) days have passed since the issuance of the previous order, the Court is required to conduct a record check review of the parties and the children involved in the action from the previously mentioned three databases. The Court is further required to notify the attorneys for the parties and the child(ren) and any self-represented litigants of the results of these searches and to indicate on the record that the Court has considered these results in making its determination.

The Honorable Judy Harris Kluger, Chief of Policy and Planning for NYS's Unified Court System, and the Honorable Sharon S. Townsend, Vice Dean of the NYS Judicial Institute were appointed by NYS Chief Administrative Judge Ann Pfau to co-chair a committee to integrate the new legislation into matrimonial practice. The work of this committee resulted in the new Request for Judicial Intervention Form (UCS-840), which requires the submission of a Matrimonial RJI Addendum (UCS-840M). In addition, counsel is now required to include the following language when submitting an order or judgment: **"Pursuant to Chapter 595 of the Laws of 2008, the Court has searched the required databases and had notified parties and counsel of said results and has considered the results of the search in making this determination."** Moreover, reference to the new legislation, specifically DRL 240 1 (a-1), is now required in several uncontested divorce forms and they are available on the website www.nycourts.gov.

Sophie Jacobi is associated with Mayerson Stutman Abramowitz, LLP and specializes in matrimonial and family law matters.

Mentoring Circles Kickoff Photos:



Photo at left: event speakers (l. to r.) Janet Cord, Martha Gifford, Donna Praiss, Andrea Vacca and Randy Shapiro. Photo at right: Mentoring Circles at work!



The New York Court System's Newly Established Volunteer Attorney Program

Earlier this year, New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman announced the creation of the Volunteer Attorney Program, which affords attorneys the opportunity, under the supervision of court staff, to volunteer their services (full-time or part-time) to assist unrepresented clients as a **Pro Bono Volunteer Attorney** or to work in a judge's chambers as a **Chambers Volunteer Attorney** by performing legal research and writing. Attorneys may select the court in which they would like to serve as well as the types of cases they would like to handle, subject to availability. Pro Bono Volunteer Attorneys handle matters ranging from consumer debt cases, matrimonial cases, mortgage foreclosures, landlord/tenant cases, small estates and uncontested divorce. The court system will provide free training, along with CLE credit, in each of these areas. Under the Chambers Volunteer Attorneys' program, a joint effort of the Unified Court System and the Lawyers in Transition Committee of the New York State Bar Association, participants work directly in chambers with a judge and court staff (trial-level courts and appellate courts) dealing with a wide variety of cases such as appellate, commercial, criminal, family, housing and torts.

Applications for Pro Bono Volunteer Attorneys and Chambers Volunteer Attorneys are available at the following links: <http://www.nycourtsystem.com/applications/Forms/VolunteerAttorneyProgram> and <https://www.nycourtsystem.com/Applications/ChambersVolunteerAttorneyApplication>. Questions should be directed to volunteerattorneys@nycourts.gov or by calling 212-428-5588.

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

The Honorable Joan B. Lobis of the NYS Supreme Court is seeking applications for the position of **Assistant Law Clerk**. The Assistant Law Clerk position is a one-year clerkship, renewable once, with a starting salary of \$62,323. The duties include preparing memoranda and drafting decisions on substantive motions, conducting discovery and settlement conferences and various administrative responsibilities. Justice Lobis is currently assigned to a medical malpractice part, but she also hears special proceedings.

Candidates must have graduated from an accredited law school no more than three (3) years prior to appointment. NYS Bar admission or eligibility is required. If interested, please send a resume and writing sample to Hon. Joan B. Lobis, 60 Centre Street, New York, New York, 10007 - Attn: Elizabeth Osborne, Esq.

NYWBA Membership Information

We thank our current members for their continued support and involvement, and we look forward to welcoming new and renewing members. Take advantage of our many member benefits - join committees, network and participate in mentoring circles, attend our signature events, and get CLE credits at our innovative and compelling programs at significantly reduced cost.

It's easy to join or renew - go to www.nywba.org and click on "Membership" to access our secure online membership form.

Current members should send updated information to info@nywba.org. This will help us keep you informed about our programs, events and other benefits of membership.

Newsletter and Advertising Information

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