



New York Women's Bar Association

invites you to join us in honoring the

***Newly Elected and Appointed
Judges of New York County***

at a Cocktail Reception at

Nicole's

10 East 60th Street

(between Madison and Fifth)

Thursday, January 18, 2007

6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

\$90 in advance; \$99 at the door

(MC/VISA and Checks Only)

RSVP to Executive Director Christina Kallas
(info@nywba.org or 212-490-8202)
and please put "Judges' Reception RSVP"
in the subject line.

*The NYWBA warmly thanks
Signature Bank for its support.*

Save the Date

WBASNY Convention 2007

May 31 - June 4, 2007

*Westin Rio Mar Beach Golf Resort & Spa
Rio Grande, Puerto Rico*

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

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Importance of Pro Bono

December 2006



Teresa Schiller

"Pro bono" is more than just idealistic legal jargon. As a pro bono and community affairs coordinator, I try to help people at my firm to work on legal and non-legal projects that benefit our society. There are many reasons to get involved, particularly in legal service projects.

Above all, performing pro bono work is for the purpose of doing good, giving back to society. Our services show non-lawyers that the profession can be a noble one. Just as doctors care for the sick, we can care for those in dire legal straits, such as indigent criminal defendants.

We have an ethical duty to perform pro bono works, according to the tenets of the New York State Bar. Pursuant to EC 2-25 of the NYSBA Lawyer's Code of Professional Responsibility, a lawyer should contribute twenty pro bono hours annually to the following: "(1) persons of limited financial means, or (2) not for profit, governmental, or public service organizations, where the legal services are designed primarily to address the legal and other basic needs of persons of limited financial means, or (3) organizations specifically designed to increase the availability of legal services to persons of limited financial means." Our pro bono service demonstrates this commitment of the legal profession to assuaging the problems of others.

Pro bono work allows us to demonstrate our commitment to certain values, such as helping to end domestic violence by helping victims to complete Violence Against Women Act petitions. Similarly, we might view our assistance to people seeking asylum as a statement against persecution in other countries.

Our service to those less fortunate also provides less-experienced lawyers, in particular, with the chance for direct responsibility for a client, which is the "bread and butter" of many senior lawyers. For many who toil away on document productions or due diligence as part of a hierarchical team of lawyers, having responsibility for a client's welfare can be refreshing, although perhaps a bit scary.

Certainly, lawyers can develop important legal skills by representing pro bono clients. For instance, having direct responsibility for a client's well-being, as discussed above, can

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Courthouse Tour A Great Success

The New York Women's Bar Association sponsored a Tour of the Courthouse program on October 25, 2006. The Tour of the New York County Supreme Court at 60 Centre Street was organized by Gillian Thomas, an associate at Heidell, Pittoni, Murphy & Bach, LLP. Mr. James Rossetti, Chief Deputy County Clerk, who has been holding similar tours at the courthouse for many years, led the tour and was of immense assistance in facilitating the program.

The program was worth 3.5 CLE Skills credit hours, and the 29 attendees were treated to a tour of the 60 Centre Street Clerk's Offices following a lecture on the history and the administration of the courthouse.

We are grateful for the participation of Administrative Judge Jacqueline W. Silbermann, who took time away from her busy courtroom to deliver the opening remarks; John Werner, Esq., Chief Clerk and Executive Officer, for his insightful lecture on the history and structure of the New York State Supreme Court; Court Reporter Brian DiGiovanna, for demonstrating the technological advances utilized in Courtroom 2000; and Yasmin Beydoun, for assisting with the tour. We are also grateful to the Clerks, including those from the Offices of Trial Support, Motion Support, Matrimonial Support, and Commercial Support, who took the time out from their busy schedules to help make the program a success.

The culmination of the program was to be a simulated calendar call in the courtroom of Justice Eileen Bransten. Justice Bransten could not complete the examination of an expert trial witness in sufficient time. Instead, she graciously permitted attendees to observe the trial.

New and veteran attorneys alike agreed that the program was useful and informative. A follow-up program is being planned for Spring 2007.

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go hand in hand with having direct client contact. Younger lawyers at firms, in particular, tend to covet opportunities to communicate directly with clients. Moreover, drafting and courtroom advocacy can be additional lessons that are learned on pro bono cases. Finally, handling one's own pro bono case involves strategic decision-making, which is a useful tool for any lawyer.

Working on pro bono cases also can help to build important relationships. If you handle a pro bono case as part of a team of lawyers, you may build some relationships that hold you in good stead on billable projects. Connections made with pro bono clients and others in the community may result in paying work down the line. According to Melanie Gray, a partner at Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP, her work on the board of an organization called Girls, Inc. led to profitability. As a result of service on the board with another woman who was the wife of the general counsel of a Fortune 500 company, she was recommended for matters that ultimately included representation of Enron in connection with their "financial implosion." Since then, she has served as one of the lead bankruptcy attorneys for Enron.

From my perspective, and from the perspective of Ms. Gray, pro bono work can be valuable because being busy has an intrinsic value. Particularly when one is slow at work, taking on a pro bono case can be desirable. However, I found as a practicing attorney that as long as I took on a new pro bono case every time I finished the previous one, the work just seemed to fit in with the rest of my schedule.

We all have a duty and incentives to do pro bono work. There may even be opportunities for you to perform pro bono work through the New York Women's Bar Association. The leader of the Pro Bono Committee, Leyla Marrouk, is exploring ways that we can provide pro bono assistance as an association. Please get in touch with her if you would like to help plan our next steps. Through the association or on our own, though, let's all take some steps to help out for the common good.

Teresa Schiller

GET MORE INVOLVED IN THE NYWBA!

We are looking for attorneys from all backgrounds and all disciplines to get more involved with projects such as the following:

helping to host CLE programs, working on committees, helping to boost membership, and joining our board.

Please e-mail NYWBA President Teresa Schiller at president@nywba.org about your interests and availability.

We're always looking for new talent and ideas!



NEW YORK WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION, INC.'S FELLOW HEATHER KEEGAN REPORTS ON NYU INMOTION INTERNSHIP

I am a second year law student at NYU School of Law and was an NYWBAF fellow at inMotion, Inc., in the Bronx during the 2005-06 academic year. InMotion provides free legal services to low-income and indigent women throughout New York City. Many clients are survivors of domestic violence who urgently need assistance with divorce, child custody and support, and immigration issues.

I interned with inMotion during the summer of 2006, and as an academic term fellow conducted intake interviews with new clients and continued to assist with the preparation of clients' divorce documents and family court petitions. Moreover, I focused on assisting inMotion staff attorneys with clients' immigration matters. A significant number of inMotion's clients are immigrant women who may be particularly vulnerable to abuse by U.S. citizen or permanent resident spouses. I prepared applications for relief under the Violence Against Women Act ("VAWA") for several clients, successfully obtaining immigration status that would permit them to live and work in the United States, without having to rely on the cooperation of their abusers for legal status.

Clients who had previously received temporary immigration protection under VAWA also required further assistance to become lawful permanent residents of the United States. Permanent resident status is often essential to the economic and social stability of immigrant women and their children, but there are frequently legal obstacles to attaining it. I assisted inMotion attorneys by researching legal problems facing their immigrant clients and identifying strategies to help them overcome the barriers to achieving permanent resident status.

The New Orleans Public Library is asking for any and all hardcover and paperback books for people of all ages in an effort to restock the shelves after Katrina. The staff will assess which titles will be designated for its collections. The rest will be distributed to destitute families or sold for library fundraising.

Please send your books to:

Rica A. Trigs, Public Relations
New Orleans Public Library
219 Loyola Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70112

If you tell the post office that they are for the library in New Orleans, they will give you the library rate, which is slightly less than the book rate.

NOTES ON MEMBERS

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

Congratulations to **Norma Z. Paige**, a former President of NYWBA, who was presented with the Arthur T. Vanderbilt Award by NYU School of Law on Tuesday, November 14. The Vanderbilt Award, which is the highest honor that NYU School of Law bestows on a graduate, was presented at a ceremony during its Annual Scholarship Reception at the Law School. Dean Richard Revesz wrote that the Award to Norma is in recognition of her "distinguished professional achievements, extraordinary service and ongoing commitment to the Law School."

Claire Gutekunst, a partner at Proskauer Rose LLP, received the Mary Rousmaniere Gordon Award from the YWCA-NYC on November 9 at the YWCA's annual Salute Luncheon. The award recognizes a member of the YWCA Academy of Women Leaders who has rendered service to the YWCA. Claire was inducted into the Academy in 1997, chairs the AWL's Advisory Council, and previously chaired the Legal Advisory Committee for the YW's Women's Employment Program.

Congratulations to Member **Kirsten Gillibrand**, who defeated John Sweeney in New York's 20th Congressional District, south of Albany.

Congratulations and best wishes to long-time NYWBA Newsletter coordinator **Karen Chu** on her recent marriage to Manwai Lu. We wish them a lifetime of happiness!

Congratulations to the following New York Women's Bar Association members who have been recently elected, re-elected, or appointed to seats on the judiciary:

Margaret Chan	Rita Mella
Paul Feinman	Shari R. Michels
Joan B. Lobis	Lori S. Sattler
Angela M. Mazzarelli	

We were saddened to hear of the death of Stephen R. Kaye, the beloved husband of Judith S. Kaye, Chief Judge of the State of New York, on October 30, 2006.

We extend our deepest sympathy to Judge Kaye and all of their family.

SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Laura Barbieri	Martha Gifford
Susan Bender	Marcia Goldstein
Laurie Berke-Weiss	Adria Hillman
Ruth Bernstein	Roberta Kaplan
Elizabeth Bryson	Michele Katz
Mary Donovan	Robert Kaufman
Betty Weinberg Ellerin	Norma Z. Paige
Myrna Felder	Karen Rosenthal
Daniel Finkelstein	Hon. Felice Shea
Catherine Foti	Carol Schragar

2006 Annual Membership Reception Attracts Crowd

On October 30, 2006, the New York Women's Bar Association held its annual reception for new, prospective, and returning members at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP, which graciously hosted and catered the event at its office. Thanks to Skadden's continued participation, the NYWBA was again able to offer this reception free of charge.

The reception provided an opportunity for law students and newly-minted attorneys to meet and mingle in a social setting with judges and more seasoned practitioners. NYWBA President Teresa Schiller; Vice Presidents Lisa A. Sokoloff, Jo Ann Douglas and Lisa Bauer; Executive Director and Immediate Past President Christina Kallas, and many committee chairs and board members were among the more than 100 seasoned attorneys who attended. As in the past, developing networking skills and job hunting were hot topics of conversation. At least one savvy headhunter collected business cards and resumes. Law students from every law school in the county attended, as well as students from as far away as Hofstra Law School on Long Island. All who attended enjoyed the wine, sushi and baked Brie, the conversation, and most of all, the camaraderie.

President Teresa Schiller, who took the podium briefly during the reception, reminded those in attendance of the importance of the NYWBA in our lives. She spoke of the historical development of our association, which was created in 1935 as a non-profit organization devoted to improving the status of women in society, educating women lawyers and assisting them in professional development and advancement, and promoting the fair and equal administration of justice. She also mentioned some of our association's current activities, such as screening of judicial candidates (that we undertake to educate the legal community), publishing our monthly newsletter, broadcasting our website and conducting low cost CLE programs, like our recent tour of the New York Supreme Court courthouse. Addressing the future of our association, Ms. Schiller vowed not to let our bar association rest on the laurels of its past. She also commented on the growing emergence of the New York Women's Bar Association Foundation, which supports law students in not-for-profit internships and recognizes leading women authors at breakfasts that are open to the entire membership. Reminding us of the importance of involvement, Ms. Schiller asked everyone to become involved in one or more of our committees. On behalf of the Association, President Schiller invited everyone to join the NYWBA for an exciting year. We hope you will as well.

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

The next meeting of the **Matrimonial Law Committee** is scheduled for **January 11, 2007 at 6:15**. Our guest speaker will be Jim McElligott the "Clerk-in-Charge" of the Matrimonial Support Office. He will speak to us about getting our papers filed and the ten most seen mistakes. For more information, please contact the committee chairs.

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

ATTORNEY - GENERAL LITIGATION DIVISION: The General Litigation Division of the New York City Law Department seeks an experienced attorney to defend the City in complex litigation challenging important City policies and programs relating to education, health, public assistance, child welfare, and other social services. Primary responsibility over own caseload and handling all phases of litigation is necessary. The ideal candidate should possess at least two years of experience litigating in state and federal courts, superior interpersonal skills, and strong analytical and writing skills. Admission to the New York State Bar is required. To apply for this position, please send a cover letter, resume, and law school transcript to Director of Legal Recruitment, New York City Law Department, 100 Church Street, Room 6-110G, New York, NY 10007. For more information about the New York City Law Department and the General Litigation Division, please visit their website at www.nyc.gov/law.

PRINCIPAL COURT ATTORNEY position available with Surrogate's Court, New York County, assigned to Surrogate Kristin Booth Glen. Qualifications: Admission to NYS Bar and two (2) years of service in the Associate Court Attorney title OR eight (8) years of relevant legal experience. Applications: Obtain UCS-5 from www.courts.state.ny.us and deliver with resume to Jane Passenant, Chief Clerk VI, Surrogate's Court, New York County, 31 Chambers Street, Room 303, New York, NY 10007.

Professional Ethics Committee

The WBASNY Professional Ethics Committee now has a hotline. If you are a WBASNY member, you can call after 6:00 p.m. at 914-472-9517 with questions regarding ethical issues. Although legal advice cannot be offered, you can be guided in the right direction as to the applicable DRs, case law, and ethics resources.

We are grateful to
Rosemary McCague
for providing the photos in the November issue
relating to the presentation
of the Florence Allen Award to Martha Gifford.



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2006 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RECEPTION



Newsletter Deadline and Contact Information

Submissions must be sent to the Newsletter Committee by the **10th** of the month for potential publication in the following month's newsletter. Please email articles, notes on members, committee calendars, and any other announcements to **Diana Ceccacci, Esq.** (tel. no. 718-229-4932) at **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 212-490-8202 or send an email to **info@nywba.org** with the updated information. This will help us keep you informed and our records up-to-date.

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