



NEW YORK WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION

NEW YORK WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RECEPTION

Meet NYWBA Officers, Directors, Committee Chairs, members and prospective members at this complimentary cocktail reception. Join colleagues and friends, network, and discover the benefits of NYWBA membership, including:

- Free CLEs for NYWBA members
- Committees to enhance your knowledge of substantive law and address important legal and social issues
- Critical legislative and legal efforts to promote the fair and equal administration of justice and help fight for the rights of women and equality for all persons
- NYWBA's highly-praised "Mentoring Circles" program
- Fun social and networking events and other benefits

Date: Thursday, September 2, 2015

Time: 6:00 to 7:45 p.m.

Place: Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP
4 Times Square, NYC (42nd btwn Bwy & Sixth)

Cost: Complimentary

RSVP: www.nywba.org/MemberReception

Be sure to RSVP by August 28, 2015 so we can prepare nametags and notify building security.

NYWBA membership is open to attorneys, judges, law students and law school graduates awaiting admission. If you are not yet a member for the current year, it's easy to join or renew at www.nywba.org/membership.

Announcements & Calendar of Upcoming Events

- 9/2 – Annual Membership Reception – p. 1
- 9/8 – Int'l Women's Rights Comm. Mtg. – p. 3
- 9/9 – Children's Rights Comm. Mtg. – p. 3
 - 9/10 – LGBT Comm. Mtg. – p. 3
 - 9/21 – Crim. Law Comm. Mtg. – p. 3
- 9/24 – How to Start – and Grow – Your Own Practice – p. 3
- 9/24 – Employment and Equal Opp. Comm. – p. 3
 - 9/29 – Litigation Comm. Mtg. – p. 3
- 10/13 – Int'l Women's Rights Comm. Mtg. – p. 3
- 10/14 – Placement Options for Children – p. 3
 - 10/15 – Elder Abuse CLE – p. 15
 - 10/22 – Maternity Leave CLE – p. 3, 13
 - 10/27 – Litigation Comm. Mtg. – p. 3

Check www.nywba.org for more Meetings, Programs & Events.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

SEPTEMBER 2015

A Look Back at the Summer and to the Year Ahead



Jennifer P. Brown

Although the 2015-2016 year has just begun, so much has happened since my first address to you in June. At the outset, I am excited to report that we hit a record membership number last year of over 800 members, continuing the trend of upward growth of our chapter over the past several years. Thank you to our Membership Chairs, **Elizabeth A. Bryson** and **Michael W. Appelbaum**, along with our Officers, Board Members, Advisory Council and Committee Chairs for their tireless efforts and outstanding work to get us to this milestone level of membership. Let's keep up the good work. Remember to renew your membership, and if each of us can commit to recruit just one new friend, the sky's the limit for where our membership numbers can go. There's strength in numbers, and we need to show just how strong this group of women (and men) can be.

We started the year off with our annual Awards and Installation Gala at the Marriott Marquis on **June 10, 2015**, where we celebrated our 80th Anniversary. Immediate Past President, **Yacine Barry-Wun** presented the **President's Special Award** to the sitting Matrimonial Justices in New York County, the **Doris S. Hoffman Service Award** was presented to **Hon. Sherry Klein Heitler** for her work as the Administrative Judge for Civil Matters in the First Judicial District and in recognition of her long service on the NYWBA Board of Directors and as an advocate for equal rights, and we recognized and congratulated **Hon. Peter H. Moulton**, the incoming Administrative Judge for Civil Matters in the First Judicial District. **Hon. Betty Weinberg-Ellerin** swore in the 2015-2016 Officers and Directors, and I had the special honor of being sworn in as President by one of my mentors and long-time friend, Past President **Hon. Lisa A. Sokoloff**.

The night was a smashing success. The membership came out in droves to support all of our amazing honorees, and was a true testament to the camaraderie and support that our members demonstrate for one another on a daily basis. My family and I were particularly touched by the outpouring of support that we received, and I want to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you.

Our fantastic Dinner was followed up by our 21st Annual Summer Program on **July 14, 2015**, that was pioneered by WBASNY Past President, **Martha E. Gifford** in 1995, and is now co-sponsored with the New York City Bar on "What It's REALLY Like to Practice Law as a Woman." A distinguished panel of women lawyers provided insights and guidance to over two hundred law students and junior

President's Message (Continued from Page 1)

attorneys just starting their legal careers (see p. 8). Thanks to past and present NYWBA Board Members **Cassandra M. Porter** and **Victoria Turchetti** and their team for organizing this program once again this year.

On **July 23, 2015** I met with our **2015-2016 Committee Chairs** to discuss plans for meetings, programs, events and Continuing Legal Education for the year ahead. I am very excited to report that I have been presented with a plethora of program ideas by our Committee Chairs. As in years past, there will be no shortage of exciting and diverse programs this year. And, of course, we will be continuing to offer free CLE programs to our members.

I can't end this message without noting some of the major legal accomplishments of this summer. First, after many years of debate between domestic violence groups, members of the matrimonial bench and bar, and the legislature, our State Legislature passed Legislation proposed by the Matrimonial Practice Advisory and Rules Committee Chaired by **Hon. Jeffrey S. Sunshine**, and supported by WBASNY, bringing sweeping spousal maintenance reform to New York. This bill was achieved after months of tireless negotiations between competing interest groups, and it is the hope of practitioners, Judges and Legislators alike that this new law, once signed by the Governor, will bring predictability and stability to maintenance rulings throughout the State.

The other major accomplishment is the United States Supreme Court's decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, 576 U.S. ____ (2015), finally ruling that the right to marry is a fundamental human right of all people in this Country, and not just a right of some. Our Bar Association has long been active in the fight for marriage equality, as part of our mission of providing legal equality to all, including submitting an amicus brief in the 2013 case of *U.S. v. Windsor*, 570 U.S. ____ (2013), which went part of the way toward bringing marriage equality. Now we can celebrate that the SCOTUS brought it all the way home! This is truly a time for celebration.

Finally, I'd like to take this opportunity to announce that both NYWBA and WBASNY have created LGBT Committees, so that our associations may join the discussion of equality for all more fully and directly on the important topic of LGBT rights at the local, state and national levels. Acting Supreme Court Justice in New York County, **Hon. Lynn R. Kotler**, and private practitioner and partner at Brady, Klein, Weissmann, LLP, **Peggy Brady**, have honored the NYWBA by taking on the task of spearheading the inaugural year of this committee as its Co-Chairs. I encourage any of our members with an interest in the area of LGBT rights to join the Committee. Their first meeting will be held at Ms. Brady's office on **September 10, 2015** at 5:30 p.m. (see p. 2).

Please check our online calendar regularly for information about our many programs throughout the year, as well as our e-blast which you will continue to receive on a regular basis. I also ask you all to take the time to respond to the email questionnaire you will be receiving in the coming months. Your answers to this will help us tailor future programs and CLE's to your interests.

Respectfully yours,



NYWBA's Employment and Equal Opportunity for Women Committee

presents

Developments at the NYC Commission on Human Rights — A Dialogue with Commissioner Malalis

Date: Thursday, September 24, 2015
Time: 6:30 pm
Location: Jackson Lewis P.C., 666 3rd Ave. (btwn 42 & 43 Sts.), 29th Fl., NYC
Cost: Free - Members
\$10 - Non-members*
RSVP: www.nywba.org/EEOWRSVP
Info: Email EEOWChairs@nywba.org

* Membership: If you are not a member, go to www.nywba.org/membership to join or renew using our secure online membership form.

SAVE THE DATE!

The New York Women's Bar Association Foundation Breakfast Series

Wednesday, November 4, 2015

The Cornell Club, 6 E. 44th Street, New York, NY

8:00 – 9:30 a.m.

Guest speaker: renowned social and legal historian **Linda Hirshman**, whose forthcoming book *Sisters in Law* tells the story of how the personal and professional relationship of Justices O'Connor and Ginsburg on the Supreme Court changed our world.

Invitation with ticket prices and other details to follow.

Introducing the LGBT Committee

NYWBA's newly formed **LGBT Committee** will hold its kickoff meeting on Thursday, **September 10, 2015** at 5:30 PM at Brady Klein Weissman LLP, 501 Fifth Ave., 19th Fl., NYC. Email LGBTChairs@nywba.org to RSVP.

COMMITTEE NEWS

- The **Children's Rights Committee** kick-off and planning meeting will be held on Sept. 9 at 1:00 p.m. at Manhattan Family Court, 60 Lafayette St., 10th Fl. Library, NYC. To RSVP email ChildrensRights@nywba.org.
- The **Criminal Law Committee** will hold its monthly meetings on **Sept. 21, Nov. 17, and Dec. 8** at 6:15 p.m. at the Hoffinger Firm, 150 East 58th St., 16th Fl., NYC. To RSVP email CrimLawChairs@nywba.org. The Committee will also co-sponsor a CLE along with the Matrimonial and Family Law Committee, the Elder Law and Disabilities Committee, and Domestic Violence Committee, on **Oct. 15** from 6:00-8:00 PM, on the topic of **Elder Abuse**, at the NYC Civil Courthouse, 111 Centre Street, Room 107, NYC. For more info, email CrimLawChairs@nywba.org.
- The **Employment and Equal Opportunity for Women Committee** will present **Developments at the New York City Commission on Human Rights — A Dialogue with Commissioner Malalis** on **Sept. 24** at 6:30 p.m., at Jackson Lewis P.C., 666 3rd Ave., 29th Fl. (between 42 & 43 Sts.), NYC. RSVP at www.nywba.org/EEOWRSVP. For more info email EEOWChairs@nywba.org. (See notice p. 2)
- The **International Women's Rights Committee** will hold monthly meetings on **Sept. 8, Oct. 13, and Nov. 10** from 6:30-7:30 p.m. at Le Pain Quotidien, 81 West Broadway, NYC. The committee will also co-sponsor a CLE program with the Employment and Equal Opportunity for Women Committee, entitled **"Maternity Leave—US and Internationally"** on **Oct. 22** from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law. (See notice p. 13) For more info and to RSVP, email IntlChairs@nywba.org.
- The **LGBT Committee** will host its first committee meeting on **Sept. 10** at 5:30 p.m. at the Offices of Brady, Klein and Weissman LLP, located at 506 Fifth Ave., 19th Floor, NYC. For more info, email LGBTChairs@nywba.org. (See notice p. 2.)
- The **Litigation Committee** will host Committee meetings on **Oct. 27 and Nov. 24**. Email LitigationChairs@nywba.org for more info.
- The **Matrimonial and Family Law Committee** will hold a meeting on **Nov. 4** on **"Interim Financial Applications"** presented by Hon. Matthew Cooper at 6:00 p.m. at the Law Office of Virginia LoPreto, 565 5th Ave. (entrance on 46th St. btwn. Madison & 5th Aves.), NYC. To register email MFChairs@nywba.org.
- The **Solo & Small Law Firm Committee** will meet on **Sept. 24** at 8:00 a.m. to discuss **"How to Start - and Grow - Your Own Practice."** Location TBD. For more info email SSFChairs@nywba.org.

SUPPORT THE NEW YORK WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION, INC.

The New York Women's Bar Association Foundation's goals are: (1) to eliminate gender bias and other forms of discrimination from the legal system and legal profession, (2) to promote the social and economic equality, safety and well being of women and children, and (3) to address the unmet legal needs of women and children. It is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit charitable organization which supports and funds charitable and philanthropic programs to aid women and children throughout Manhattan and beyond.

NYWBAF initiatives are made possible through the financial contributions of members of the New York Women's Bar Association, colleagues and friends. Donations are tax-deductible as charitable contributions.

Help us advance our mission to aid women and children in New York and beyond by giving to the Foundation. To make a contribution please go to <http://nywbaf.org/donate>.

NOTES ON MEMBERS

Congratulations to NYWBA Diversity Committee Co-Chair, **Amrita Prabhu-Mahabaleswara** and her family on their new baby boy.

Congratulations to past president and board member, **Elizabeth A. Bryson** on her installation to the board of directors of The National Conference of Women Bar Associations.

A hearty thanks to **Amelia Coulter**, owner and creator of **Sugarbuilt**, for her generous donation of her custom, handmade and delicious NYWBA decorated cookies for our WBASNY convention basket. See Amelia's website (www.sugarbuilt.com) for all her amazing and beautiful work.

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



SUSTAINING MEMBERS

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

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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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as of 8/11/15

NYWBA Annual Awards and Installation Dinner and 80th Anniversary Party

By Jo Ann Douglas

On June 10, 2015, the New York Women's Bar Association celebrated its 80th Anniversary, and what a party it was! From registration, hosted by the invaluable Executive Director **Karen Lu**, to the renowned cocktail hour, to the welcoming words of **Myra L. Freed** and the closing remarks of Auction co-chair **Virginia A. LoPreto**, over 400 guests agreed just how good it was to be 80.

The night began with sumptuous hors d'oeuvres and cocktails, over which guests participated in the silent auction, which raised over \$10,000 to benefit the NYWBA Foundation and Hon. Betty Weinberg Ellerin Fellowship.

Along with a record number of guests, there were a greater than usual number of welcomed and particularly deserving honorees. For this occasion, all seven of New York County's matrimonial judges received our President's Special Award. We were so proud to fête **Hon. Matthew F. Cooper**, **Hon. Tandra L. Dawson**, **Hon. Laura E. Drager**, **Hon. Ellen F.**

Gesmer, **Hon. Douglas E. Hoffman**, **Hon. Deborah A. Kaplan**, and **Hon. Lori S. Sattler**, the remarkable Justices who hear some of the most contentious and compelling cases.

Stephen D. Hoffman, a long-time supporter and friend, and **Hon. Kelly O'Neill Levy** joined in to honor **Justice Sherry Klein Heitler** with the Doris S. Hoffman Service Award. Justice Heitler, a long-time member of our Board of Directors and newly appointed Chief of Policy and Planning for the NYS Unified Court System's Office of Court Administration, has served our organization and our county—and now our State—with dedication and grace for decades.

In commemoration of our 80th Anniversary, **Elizabeth A. Bryson**, co-chair of our History & Archives Committee, updated, organized and presented a wonderful portion of our Dinner Journal, with photos, memorabilia and biographies of past presidents.

We were delighted to recognize **Hon. Peter H. Moulton**, newly appointed Administrative Judge for Civil Matters, First Judicial District, whom we've always known and admired.

The **Hon. Betty Weinberg Ellerin** joined us, as always, to install our newly elected Vice Presidents, Secretaries, Treasurer, Board Members and WBAS-NY Delegates.

The evening ended with the installation of our newly elected President, **Jennifer P. Brown**, who was sworn in by the **Hon. Lisa A. Sokoloff**, a long-time friend and mentor of Jennifer's, whose warmth and pride helped make the evening a particularly heymish one. Jennifer's Incoming President's Remarks gave us great insight and anticipation of the year to come.

Jo Ann Douglas is a NYWBA Past President and member of the Board of Directors. She is a solo practitioner in the areas of Family and Matrimonial Law.



NYWBA 80th Anniversary Party (continued)



NYWBA 80th Anniversary Party (continued)



NYWBA 80th Anniversary Party (continued)



What It's (REALLY) Like to Practice Law as a Woman Annual Summer Program Reaches a Milestone and Still Going Strong By Cassandra Porter

As statistics are released that suggest women are attending law school in record numbers and also leaving the profession in greater numbers, the importance of career planning, mentoring and networking for new lawyers has never been more important. Early in the NYWBA's history, the Association's leaders recognized the need to provide guidance for attorneys just starting out in their careers. Out of this foresight, the program "*What It's (REALLY) Like to Practice Law as a Woman*" was created in 1995 and spearheaded by WBASNY Past President, **Martha E. Gifford**. Now in its 20th year, the "Summer Program", as it is affectionately called, is an annual and highly anticipated event that features a panel of women attorneys at all stages in their careers, who offer their advice and insights to attendees.

This year's program drew over 200 attendees, the majority of whom were law students, summer associates, interns, and lawyers in their early years of practice. After introductions by Summer Program co-chair **Victoria A. Turchetti**, New York City Bar President **Debra L. Raskin** spoke of the benefits of joining a bar association, such as the City Bar and New York Women's Bar Association, as a platform for career development. NYWBA President **Jennifer P. Brown**

echoed President Raskin's comments and noted that her own career path was bolstered as a result of her participation in bar associations, including the NYWBA. After thanking our co-sponsor for its hospitality, President Brown introduced the night's moderator, **Wendy Kornreich, Esq.**, President, WLK Solutions Inc., who in turn introduced the evening's featured speakers.

The panelists included: **Melanie Chieu, Esq.**, Associate, Ellenoff, Grossman & Schole, LLP; **Carmelyn P. Malalis, Esq.**, Chair and Commissioner, New York City Commission of Human Rights; **Jennifer M. Rosa, Esq.**, Counsel, Mayer Brown LLP; and **Cherise J. (CJ) Teasley, Esq.**, Senior Associate Corporate Counsel, VMware, Inc.

The moderator and panelists shared their personal histories and career anecdotes while imparting advice to the attendees. They detailed their own individual efforts to develop their career plans, as well as their struggles along the way. In order to advance one's career, the panelists recommend, first and foremost, that it is important to perform excellent work, which will encourage people to take notice of an employee, as well as to forgive the employee if a mistake is made. They also spoke of the importance of

having "common sense" as well as the "emotional intelligence" to understand what the person to whom you are reporting and/or delivering work really wants, and continually taking stock of and improving the skills in one's own personal "toolbox." The panelists recommended that young attorneys try to be flexible and open to new options, including practice areas and legal environments not previously considered. Finally, the panelists also emphasized the importance of mentoring and networking in helping to advance your career.

Following the panel discussion, a wine and cheese networking reception allowed attendees to engage directly with members of the panel and moderator, as well as with experienced attorneys from the NYWBA and City Bar, including NYWBA Officers, Directors and Committee Chairs. Lively discussions were abundant, and the feedback from attendees was extremely positive. Several attendees spoke of how inspired and encouraged they were by the panel's experiences and advice, and expressed great interest in joining the NYWBA.

Cassandra Porter is Counsel at Lowenstein Sandler LLP. Her practice focuses on corporate restructuring and privacy law. She is a Co-Chair of the Summer Program.





*The NYWBA Committee Chairs met on July 23rd to discuss plans for meetings, programs, events and CLEs for the upcoming year.
Photo by: Jessica Mandel*

My Summer Internship at the New York Asian Women's Center *By Judy Luo*

As someone who has always been interested in serving the Asian and Asian-American communities, I decided to attend law school so I could help inform and empower individuals to fight for their rights. Last summer, the NYWBA Foundation supported me with a public interest stipend, which gave me the most rewarding experience of my professional life as an intern in the legal department of the New York Asian Women's Center (NYAWC).

With community offices in three boroughs, NYAWC is a non-profit organization that helps women and their children overcome domestic violence and other forms of abuse by empowering them to take control of their own lives. Along with multi-lingual support programs, a 24-hour support hotline, and domestic violence shelters, NYAWC works to raise public awareness about violence against women, and advocates for the rights of survivors to act as an agent of social change.

My internship allowed me to deepen my understanding of immigration and family law in order to help my clients, who were primarily undocumented Asian immigrants living below the poverty line. Many of these immigrants were women, not much older than my law school peers and me, who were raising young children while simultaneously trying to recover from the trauma inflicted on them by abusive spouses or human traffickers. Under the attentive supervision of my two fiercely dedicated supervising attorneys, Carrey Wong and Gillian Kosinski, I was able to help clients seek a variety of immigration remedies by drafting affidavits based on client and witness interviews, writing legal memos and briefs, corresponding with federal and local law enforcement agents, collaborating with social service counselors, accompanying clients to interviews with immigration officers, and assisting in their representation in Immigration Court.

Given the complexity of the immigration system and the disadvantaged position of most indigent immigrants, pro bono immigration

attorneys are vital to ensuring that immigrants are able to secure their rights under the law. I met dozens of clients who were independent, determined, and brave, yet simply lacked the linguistic and cultural fluency, as well as the legal knowledge and economic resources, to seek high-quality immigration remedies for themselves and their families. As a result, they lived in constant fear of being detained or deported, which made them more vulnerable to abuse by landlords, employers, and intimate partners.

My internship showed me that committed, holistic immigration lawyering can empower individuals and shield them from harm. A domestic violence victim from China, for example, can protect both herself and her daughter against her abusive U.S. citizen husband by applying for a VAWA self-petition so that she can apply for permanent residence in the U.S. without needing to depend on her abuser. A Filipino survivor of human trafficking can protect himself from deportation by applying for a trafficking visa, which would allow him to temporarily live and work in the U.S. while assisting law enforcement in investigating his trafficker. A young, undocumented Korean woman, who considers herself an American and is earning a college degree, can apply for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) so that she can stay in the U.S. and focus on creating a better life for herself and her family.

Interning at NYAWC reinforced my commitment to public service. It also strengthened my understanding of, and commitment to, improving the lives of immigrants, domestic violence victims, and trafficking survivors in the U.S. I could not have done this internship without the financial generosity of the New York Women's Bar Association Foundation, Inc.

Judy Luo is a 2015 graduate of Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law.

NYWBA wishes to acknowledge the generous gift from
FOUNDER AND PAST PRESIDENT HON. FLORENCE PERLOW SHIENTAG (1908-2009)
Her financial bequest has helped to underwrite the cost of this Newsletter and many of our CLE programs.

A Special Thank You to the Supporters of the Summer Program

Thank you to Co-Chairs, Cassandra Porter and Victoria Turchetti, Shannon Zhu, as well as the many Summer Program volunteers; to panelists Melanie Chieu, Esq., Carmelyn P. Malalis, Esq., Jennifer M. Rosa, Esq., and Cherise J. (CJ) Teasley, Esq., as well as to our moderator Wendy Kornreich, Esq; and to the New York City Bar, including the Committees on Law Student Perspectives, Sex and the Law, and Women in the Profession.

A very special thank you to the following firms whose underwriting sponsorships, and continued support, made the Summer Program possible – **Premier Sponsor:** New York Life Insurance Company; **Leadership Sponsors:** AXA Equitable Life Insurance Company, Bank of New York Mellon, Barbri, Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP, Debevoise & Plimpton LLP, MetLife Inc., Morgan Stanley, Shearman & Sterling LLP, Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP, Sullivan & Cromwell LLP, and Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz; **Inclusion Partners:** Baker & Hostetler LLP, Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft LLP, Chadbourne & Parke LLP, Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP, Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher, Jenner & Block LLP, Kaye Scholer LLP, Latham & Watkins LLP, Metropolitan Black Bar Association, Oppenheimer Funds, Perkins Coie LLP, Proskauer Rose LLP, Sidley Austin LLP, Vladeck, Waldman, Elias & Engelhard, P.C.; and **Inclusion Friends:** Carter Ledyard & Milburn LLP, Cooley LLP, Guggenheim Partners, Kelley Drye & Warren LLP, Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP, and Prudential Financial, Inc.

Given the Summer Program's milestone anniversary, we also extend special thanks to, among others, Martha (Meg) Gifford, Elizabeth (Beth) Bryson, and Lisa Bauer whose foresight, guidance, and leadership was (and remain) instrumental to the Summer Program's continued success. We also extend a special thank you to Martha Harris, whose dedication to the success of Summer Program remains unrivaled.

Have You Renewed Your Membership for 2015-2016?

If you have already renewed, THANK YOU! If you haven't, it's time to RENEW your membership for 2015-2016!

The NYWBA fiscal year is June 1 to May 31. Be sure to renew your membership and enjoy all NYWBA benefits, including FREE NYWBA CLE PROGRAMS (which more than pays for the cost of membership), our award-winning Mentoring Circles, networking events and Committee meetings, access to the "Members Only" sections of our website, access to our Newsletters online, and other benefits.

Save paper & mailing costs, and expedite your renewal by using our secure online membership form at www.nywba.org/membership. You can also email Executive Director Karen Lu (ED@nywba.org) to confirm your member status or request a paper membership form by email.

NYWBA would like to thank

Smith Financial Strategies Group

for their generous sponsorship of the 2015 Annual Awards and Installation Dinner and 80th Anniversary Party on June 10, 2015.

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A Night at the Opera with the NYWBA

By Jessica Miller



On April 30, 2015, a group of NYWBA members and guests attended a performance of *The Merry Widow* at the Metropolitan Opera House. It was this writer's first opera, and it was a delight to experience it with members who are well-versed in opera culture. As experienced operagoers explained to this writer, *The Merry Widow* was far less dramatic and much more uplifting than the majority of other operas, making it the perfect way to experience opera for the first time. With lyrics in English, the story line was easy to follow, making the personal, in seat subtitles unnecessary for most of the performance.

The Merry Widow tells the tale of a wealthy young widow from the fictional Pontevedro. The plot centers on the Pontevedrian ambassador's efforts to find the widow a new husband in order to keep the grand fortune she inherited from her late husband within the country, so that the country is spared from bankruptcy. Set in early twentieth-century Paris, the stunning sets were a wonderful accompaniment to the elaborate costumes, which truly showed the unparalleled production quality of the Metropolitan Opera.

Beautiful and lively music accompanied the upbeat and sometimes funny plot. From the very first note, attendees were wowed by the beautiful voices of the cast, including Susan Graham, Andriana Chuchman, Rod Gilfry and Stephen Costello. During intermission, the group gathered to discuss the performance while enjoying a complimentary glass of champagne. Other members and guests were happy to share their first opera experiences.

The three-act performance finished with a beautiful finale that brought the audience to its feet. Members and guests all enjoyed a beautiful night at the Met and the Events Committee looks forward to planning a return visit!

Jessica Miller is an associate at Levin & Glasser, P.C. and works on commercial and matrimonial litigation.

New York Women Bar Leaders Brunch, April 18, 2015



Brunch held at the home of *Claire P. Gutekunst*, NYSBA President-Elect on April 18, 2015, held to bring together New York Women Bar Leaders in the downstate area. This event was a wonderful opportunity to build bridges and expand the reach of our organization.

Caren Aronowitz Unity in Diversity Celebration

By Judith Rifkin

On Friday, June 5, 2015, the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York, the New York Women's Bar Association and The Judges and Lawyers Breast Cancer Alert jointly sponsored a table at the **12th Annual Caren Aronowitz Unity in Diversity** celebration which has been held each year since 2004 in the rotunda of the New York County Courthouse, 60 Centre Street.

This event, which is sponsored by the Gender Fairness Committee of the Supreme Court, Civil Branch, New York County, is one of the highlights at the courthouse that brings together bar associations, community organizations, unions and many segments of bench, bar and beyond to celebrate diversity and promote greater understanding and tolerance within the courts and the wider legal community. The program features social interaction rather than speeches. Those in attendance visit tables staffed by volunteer servers from both sides of the bench who offer delicious cuisine ranging from appetizers to desserts that reflect the numerous, diverse customs and cultures within the wider court family.

The inaugural program was chaired by Justice Doris Ling-Cohan, Justice Tanya R. Kennedy and Retired Justice Marilyn Shafer. Caren Aronowitz, chief organizer and promoter, was one of the most active members of this court's Anti-Bias Committee, the forerunner of the Gender Fairness Committee, which grew out of the recommendations of the New York Task Force on Women.

The Task Force was convened in 1984 by then Chief Judge Lawrence H. Cooke and was charged with identifying gender bias and making recommendations for eradicating it. In April 1986, the Task Force submitted a report to Chief Judge Sol Wachtler concluding that "gender bias against women litigants, attorneys and court employees is a pervasive problem with grave consequences. Women are often denied equal justice, equal treatment and equal opportunity" in the State's judicial system. Within weeks, Chief Judge Wachtler appointed a committee to implement the Task Force's recommendations for eliminating vestiges of gender bias and insensitivity in New York's courts (Fordham Urban Law Journal, Volume 19, Issue 2, Article 4 [1991]).

While all committee members embraced the idea to implement a program to celebrate diversity and strengthen professional relationships in the legal community, Caren was its enthusiastic proponent. She created the program logo and flyer and was responsible for the program's coordination. Seventeen organizations, including Asian American Bar Association of New York, Brehon Law Society, Cervantes Society, Gay-Straight Alliance of NYS Courts and Jewish Lawyers Guild co-sponsored the inaugural event.

A great fan of the soulful but uplifting melodies of the bagpipes, Caren arranged for the NYS Court System's own Pipes and Drums Band to herald the commencement of these annual festivities, a tradition which continues year after year.

The diversity event is named in honor of Caren Aronowitz, who was a tireless advocate for fairness and equal opportunity throughout her thirty plus years in the Unified Court System and until her untimely death on September 11, 2008 at the age of 55. During her long and productive career Caren served as secretary to several judges including Justices Ethel B. Danzig and Helen Friedman, and later as a Principal Court Analyst in the Administrative Office of the Supreme Court, Civil Branch, New York County.

Judith Rifkin is court attorney to the Honorable Lisa A. Sokoloff, Civil Court Judge currently sitting in Criminal Court, New York County. Ms. Rifkin serves as co-chair of the NYWBA Criminal Law Committee.

VIRTUAL FIRMS

By Susan Dennehy

On June 18, 2015, the **Solo and Small Law Firm Committee** presented its CLE program **"Spend Time Not Money: Virtual Firms, Collegial Relationships & Referrals"** at the offices of Tarter Krinsky & Drogin LLP. **Skylar Bader**, a NYWBA member with an entirely virtual solo practice, provided an insider's candid guide to developing and running a viable virtual firm. Marketing specialist **Carol Schiro Greenwald, Ph.D.**, and NYWBA Vice President **Amy Goldsmith** discussed marketing for both traditional and virtual law firms, explaining how a virtual firm can compete with large brick and mortar firms. Throughout the presentation, the speakers discussed ethical issues raised by virtual firms.

WHY A VIRTUAL LAW FIRM?

Virtual law firm practices come in many iterations, shaped by the practice's client base. They range from solo practitioners delivering online services, to large firms practicing outside the traditional bricks-and-mortar setting. A virtual law firm is a technology-linked entity, largely paperless and subject to all of the ethical and practice rules of office-based law firms.

As Bader pointed out, virtual firms are a great way for a young lawyer to begin a law practice without a crushing overhead. Virtual offices have the marketplace agility to quickly spot business trends and provide responsive legal services. Virtual firms can enter new jurisdictions through collaboration with a network of lawyers in different states or countries. They can reach people in underserved rural markets as well as provide less expensive services for a middle class market that cannot afford high hourly fees.

On a personal level, lawyers in a virtual practice have the freedom to work from home or other locations that make sense to them. It also allows the creation of a nontraditional firm culture and an ability to leverage that with clients who may share that worldview.

WHAT DO YOU NEED FOR A VIRTUAL LAW PRACTICE?

The core features you need to get started include the following:

- **Physical address.** Ethics guidelines require that you have an address that can accept service of process and receive mail. Bader said that you are required to publish your address on your website, but will want to add "by appointment only" so as not to be misleading under the rules, as well as to prevent drop-ins. For a virtual firm, there are options: a post office box at the UPS store or the post office. UPS will sign for you and it is inexpensive. There are co-working spaces and executive suites and these can be found on the internet. Additionally, bar organizations may have virtual law firm programs for its members. The New York City Bar Association, for example, provides a personal Manhattan address to receive mail and deliveries for \$75 per month. If you are working from your home, you may prefer to use an executive suite as your "principal office address" rather than disclosing your home address to the public, particularly if you handle domestic relations cases or have a criminal practice. Another thing to consider if you use your home as your principal office: make sure your lease or co-op agreement allows you to do so.

- **Malpractice insurance.** As a sole proprietor, you need malpractice coverage. Premises liability insurance is not necessary, however.

- **Security—Invest in the most secure security software possible!** Bader emphasized that a virtual firm's **internet connection** must be secure—not a Starbucks or public library. A home internet network is usually secure enough,

although you must have a strong **password**. Bader recommended investing in a **password manager**, explaining that you will need secure passwords for everything that you touch! She identified two password services such as "LastPass" and "1Password", both with good reputations and nominal annual costs. Lock your phone. Lock your computer—with a physical laptop lock if you work in public spaces—and check your privacy settings at least quarterly.

- **Secure communication channels.** Bader reminded that it is easy to slip into privacy lapses with a virtual office—taking client cell phone calls in public places, reading client emails on the train, leaving printouts in a community printer in a co-working space. Remember, Gmail is not secure—a "bot" reads all of your emails and tries to sell you advertising. Bader recommended using **client portals** for communication with clients that are accessible via a login user name and secure password, and suggested either Dropbox for Professionals or setting up your own domain. A word of warning: **FREE is not secure!** Bader advised against texting substantive comments to clients and also to keep sensitive discussions with clients limited to the phone, Skype, or in person. The panel recommended having the client sign an informed consent to communicate with counsel via email.

- **Technology. What will you need?** Get a lightweight laptop or tablet and an ergonomic bag; a word processor that can export to Word and spreadsheet software; an online calendar system such as Google or Outlook (but if it's free, don't put anything sensitive on it) and secure cloud storage. Get at least two backup systems—an external drive and another such as Crashplan or Carbonite. Bader says that the best thing you can buy is a good scanner, and highly recommended ScanSnap on Amazon for less than \$200. Be prepared and create a mobile office bag with extras of every charger, clips, pens and paper. Keep it in your backpack and you will always have what you need at the ready!

- **Privacy Policy.** The major thing you need on your website is a privacy policy because you collect personal and confidential client information. The panel recommended visiting the disclosure page of top companies and adapting the language of what they say to fit your own practice. Virtual firms are also required to maintain policies and procedures regarding security breaches, data theft, and privacy.

MARKETING

Each of the speakers urged maintaining collegial relationships with other attorneys and old and new clients. By remaining connected, Goldsmith pointed out that her firm has been asked to partner with other firms and provide specialized legal services in areas of the law that were outside the scope of the primary counsel's practice.

In conclusion, the presenters agreed that whatever the firm's method of delivery of legal services, the goal is to better serve the public. Bader expressed her gratitude for the changing legal landscape and said that even though the economy pressured her to hang out her shingle, she thankfully discovered a virtual law firm is the perfect business model for her personality and life situation. She added that "she believes it is the disrupter that the legal industry needs to force it to change so it can survive in the new economy."

Susan Dennehy is a patient safety advocate, representing patients and their families in medical negligence cases at her practice, Dennehy Law Firm at 11 Park Place.

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55 Fifth Ave., NYC
- CLE:** 2 CLE Credits*
- Cost:** Free - Members** / \$50 - Non-members***
- Info:** For more info and to RSVP email IntlChairs@nywba.org

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Tackling Twitter
 By *Melissa Glassman*

On June 11, the Association sponsored its second social media CLE event: **"Twitter: Best Practices & Attorney Advertising Ethics"** at Frankfurt Kurnit Klein & Selz P.C.

The first half of the CLE focused on why Twitter is a helpful networking tool; unlike other social media sites such as Facebook and LinkedIn, Twitter is an informative tool that allows a person to "follow" specific organizations, people, television shows, etc. The Association has a Twitter account and "following" the NYWBA twitter account will enable a person to stay updated on upcoming events. For example, in June, the NYWBA Twitter account tweeted "@NYWBA + @nyliberty meet again @TheGarden on Aug. 11! Register now!" This tweet also included the registration link, making it easy to sign up immediately.

Vikram Rajan, Co-founder of phoneBlogger.net, explained that the best way to understand Twitter is to think of it as being analogous to a press conference. In order to get participants to understand that concept better, he asked the group to consider, "Who is behind the microphone and who is on the other side listening?"

Three differences between Twitter and other social media platforms are: 1) There is no mutual "follow" so if you follow someone they do not automatically follow you. 2) Twitter only allows for 140 characters for each tweet so that the information is informative while being succinct. 3) Twitter allows for general streaming or event-focused tweets. The best way to grow the amount of people who "follow" an account is to "follow" their account first. In sum, Twitter is all about dissemination and if used strategically, it can target an audience as a useful social media tool.

The second portion of the CLE was presented by **Nicole Hyland, Esq.**, who brought in ethical considerations when using Twitter professionally, including ways in which lawyers are prohibited from soliciting clients. Hyland pointed out that it would be acceptable for a prospective client to first reach out to an attorney on a form of social media through a private direct message (DM), however it is always important to remember that social media outlets are public and that conversations between clients and attorneys should only take place through private messages, emails or phone calls. Finally, Hyland reminded attendees that an advertisement appearing online must be preserved for at least one year and traditional print advertisements must be held for at least three years.

Melissa Glassman is a second year law student at the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law. She is interested in pursuing a career in matrimonial and family law.

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Passing of the Gavel



Immediate Past President **Yacine Barry-Wun** passes the gavel to NYWBA President **Jennifer P. Brown**.

Feeling Entrepreneurial? Look Before you Leap

By Michael B. Salmon

Many people dream about starting a business, but it's a big step that requires serious planning and preparation. Additionally, venturing out on your own can have major implications on your financial situation. Those who decide to walk away from the security of a steady job to the world of entrepreneurship find that they are moving to something that is very different, yet new and exciting.

Be prepared before you leave your day job

Everybody's experience is different, but there are a few aspects of self-employment that you should make sure you are comfortable with before making a major life change:

- Cash flow may be tight in the first months (or even years) of owning your own business. It can take time to attract customers, and expenses are often higher in the initial stages of a business. You will want to be frugal with your money and carefully consider all expenditures, especially when starting out.
- When your business has a good week or month, remember that every month may not be as lucrative. You'll need to keep some cash in reserve for those days when the business hits a rough patch.
- The hours can be long and you might feel like you are on call 24 hours a day. It's important to be totally committed to what you are doing if you hope to be successful.
- Be ready to take care of a lot of tasks. Unlike a corporate position where you are responsible for specific duties, entrepreneurs have to be ready to do everything, from keeping books to cleaning floors to making sales calls.
- If you have a family, make sure they are prepared for the change. Starting a business can require significant time and energy and may have an impact on your home life. A spouse and children need to understand this since you'll need their support.

Steps to get ready

If you're set on starting your own business, don't make the move overnight. Planning is critical to make the transition as smooth as possible. Here are a few steps to consider:

- **Write a plan** – having a business plan that spells out what you are trying to do, the markets you are trying to reach and key milestones is important.
- **Determine the legal structure** – will your business be a corporation, partnership or sole proprietorship? Explore your options. You'll likely want to consult with an attorney or accountant.
- **Consider starting it on the side** – if it is possible, you may want to start the business as a side project before you leave your job. This can give you a better sense of whether your prospects for success are good once you go at it full time.
- Have a financial plan in place – you will almost certainly need a pool of money to help you get started or keep you financially afloat in the early years of your business. You should have a financial plan that can help specify what you need on hand and any financial gaps that must be filled before you make the move. The decision to start a business may be the most important of your financial life. A plan is critical to ensure that you are in a position to make it work.



Michael B. Salmon, is a Financial Advisor with Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc. in New York City, NY. He specializes in fee-based financial planning and asset management strategies. Call (646) 964-9470 or email michael.b.salmon@ampf.com to contact.

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IN MEMORIAM

Sandra "Sandy" W. Jacobson

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of our former President, colleague, mentor and friend, **Sandra "Sandy" W. Jacobson**. We recently learned of Sandy's passing during the research and preparation of our last dinner journal. Sandy earned her LLB from Yale and was admitted to the bar in 1955. She was a highly respected matrimonial and family law practitioner and litigator and a zealous and passionate advocate for women and children.

Sandy served our organization well as President, Vice President, Treasurer, Director and WBASNY delegate. She chaired the Matrimonial & Family Law, Ethics, and Judiciary Committees and organized and spoke at many important NYWBA and other bar association events, CLE programs and conventions.

At the WBASNY level, she chaired the Amicus Curiae, Judiciary, CLE, and By-Laws Committees, and Co-Chaired the WBASNY Matrimonial Law committee. She wrote WBASNY's amicus application and appellate brief in the landmark *Hartog* equitable distribution case (85 NY 2d 36, 1995), raising critical and unique issues that only WBASNY addressed. She also led the successful effort for WBASNY to become an accredited CLE provider.

She was a proud Fellow of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers and a founder and active member of the Interdisciplinary Forum of Mental Health and Family Law, as well as an early advocate for the passage of no fault divorce in New York.

Most importantly, she was a wonderful, giving mentor to so many young lawyers and NYWBA members, NYWBA and WBASNY Presidents, Directors and Board members. Her quick wit, critical insights and wisdom were treasured by many. Sandy passed away in North Carolina after retiring there to be with her beloved daughter and husband, who both predeceased her. She will be both missed and lovingly remembered by so many.

* * * * *

Frederic P. Schneider

In July, we lost one of our kindest, smartest, most genuine and personable friends and colleagues, **Frederic P. Schneider**. Fred was known to so many as a dedicated matrimonial and family law attorney, representing adults and children in innumerable cases, both in trial courts and on appeals. His fervor for his clients was unflinching, and he treated his indigent clients no differently than the wealthy ones.

Fred was also known in his wide circle of colleagues and admirers as a steadfast and ready source of wonderful advice on many subjects. He was also a superb role model to newer attorneys looking for guidance and support. As a friend, Fred was always available, always ready to put aside whatever he was doing to lend a hand, an ear, or more importantly, a smile and that wonderful sparkle that was so unique to him, even through nearly two years of a devastating condition that eventually took his life, but never his hope or humor.

When Fred learned of his illness, he never sought to change a thing; he always lived life at its fullest, and to Fred, that meant with his family, and he just wanted to keep on living that way. His wife, Harriet Weinberger, and daughters, Lauren and Stephanie, were his world. What a wonderful world it was.

* * * * *

Our deepest condolences to New York County Matrimonial Judge **Matthew Cooper** on the passing of his father, David Cooper in July.

Our deepest condolences to **Rona Wexler** on the death of her husband, Eugene Fixler.

Her Justice & the NYWBA Foundation: Forging the Next Generation of Practitioners

By *Jacqueline Marie Seitz*

As the NYWBA Foundation fellow in Fall 2014, I had the opportunity to work closely with fifteen clients at Her Justice, providing free of charge legal services ranging from uncontested and contested divorces and custody disputes, to immigration relief for survivors of domestic violence.

Working at Her Justice took me to courtrooms throughout New York City. I accompanied a client and her daughter to immigration court, and shadowed an extern attorney from Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld as she represented clients at the Integrated Domestic Violence Part in Supreme Court, New York County, Bronx Family Court, and Supreme Court, Queens County. The work vastly expanded my familiarity with New York City's homeless services, domestic violence supportive housing services, and the New York City Administration for Children's Services. As a future advocate, I greatly valued the opportunity to familiarize myself with the services available to low-income women and survivors of domestic violence in New York City, and to better understand gaps in the existing infrastructure.

Many Her Justice clients face issues at the intersection of family law, criminal law, and immigration law. As the NYWBA Foundation fellow, I conducted legal research on novel questions of law related to transgender rights, trafficking, and the rights of minors in the United States and abroad. I also helped prepare and develop five immigration applications for survivors of domestic violence, including applications for U-Visas to obtain nonimmigrant status and applications to "self-petition" for permanent residency under the Violence Against Women Act.

One highlight from my fellowship helps demonstrate the importance of Her Justice's work and the caliber of the attorneys who work and volunteer there. On a rainy morning in the Bronx, I accompanied one of Her Justice's extern attorneys to represent a client in a custody dispute in the Family Court. After a contentious hearing and some heated accusations from the adverse party, we left the court and our client broke into tears, shaking her head. I watched as the attorney calmly counseled and encouraged the client while huddled under an umbrella, and saw our client's palpable sense of relief and self-confidence emerge. This commitment was on display every day at the Her Justice's offices. It was a privilege to enhance my legal education at Her Justice and I thank the New York Women's Bar Association Foundation for the opportunity.

Jacqueline Marie Seitz is a 2015 graduate of New York University School of Law.

Seeking NYWBA Foundation Board Candidates

The NYWBA Foundation Board is seeking Association members who are interested in joining the Board of Directors. We are a voluntary group and each member contributes her time and passion to our mission to: 1) eliminate gender bias and other forms of discrimination from the legal system and legal profession, 2) promote the social and economic equality, safety and well-being of women and children, and 3) address the unmet legal needs of women and children. Our Directors are expected to support the Foundation both financially and with substantial time devoted to hands on work. If you are interested, please send your CV and a letter of interest to: info@nywbaf.org.

Benchmark Women in Litigation Forum

The forum will address real challenges women face in a litigation environment. How do women thrive in litigation to make it as a leading role in counsel, and how can female litigators encourage each other to excel in this industry? Join us for this one-day highly interactive forum to take away key advice and network with other women involved in litigation.

Date: September 10, 2015

Place: Convene Times Square
 810 Seventh Ave., NYC

Cost: Free - for in-house, general, litigation counsel, IP, trademark, patent counsel
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Info: Call Sarah Wall at + 44 (0) 207 779
 or email sarah.wall@legalmediagroup.com

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Date: Thursday, Oct. 15, 2015

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Place: NYC Civil Court House
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CLE: CLE Credits pending *

Cost: Free - Members **
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RSVP: Email CrimLawChairs@nywba.org
 for details and to register.

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