



# FAWL Journal

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## **'Women Making History'**

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## Understanding the Past, Celebrating the Future

by Tasha K. Dickinson, Esq.

Sandra Day O'Connor, the first woman appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court, has said, "Despite the encouraging and wonderful gains and the changes for women which have occurred in my lifetime, there is still room to advance and to promote correction of the remaining deficiencies and imbalances."

We as women lawyers go through our careers trying to become experts in our fields, to achieve a work/life balance and to be effective leaders in our communities. However, we must take time to remember and celebrate women who have helped to shape the history of our country and our profession.

FAWL's mission is to support the advancement of women in the legal profession. To achieve this mission, we are all inspired, of course, by the efforts of women lawyers throughout

*"The possibilities for women are endless for our generation and for generations to come."*

history. In 1777, Abigail Smith Adams, wife of second President John Adams and mother of sixth President John Quincy Adams, wrote that women "... will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation." Her words certainly foreshadowed events to take place

long after her death. In 1868, women lawyers became licensed to practice law in the United States. In 1890, Wyoming became the first state to allow women to vote, and in 1929, the 19th Amendment was ratified, giving women the right to vote in federal elections. Since then, women have made great strides in American society. Furthermore, we continue to break through the glass ceiling, pushing women's achievements to new heights.

Consider this sampling of women's firsts after Sandra Day O'Connor was appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1981:

- Janet Reno was the first woman to be appointed U.S. attorney general (1993).
- Madeleine Albright became the first woman U.S. secretary of state (1997).
- Condoleezza Rice was the first African-American woman to be appointed secretary of state (2005).
- Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, former U.S. first lady, ran for president of the United States, paving the way for a female candidate to achieve that goal (2008).

The possibilities for women are endless for our generation and for generations to come. So long as we continue to work together, not only in the legal community but also in the community at large, women will continue to set new "firsts" and to advance the common well-being and strength of our nation. ●

### On the cover:

Former U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno (photo by Shelley Marie Images); inset: Marisol Gomez-Decena (left), secretary of Miami-Dade FAWL, and Julie Braman Kane (right), president of Miami-Dade FAWL, present former U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno with an engraved crystal vase honoring her as a "Woman Making History."



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*Miami-Dade FAWL board members meet with former U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno during the annual "Women Making History" Reception in Coral Gables.*

## 'Women Making History' Janet Reno

The Miami-Dade Chapter of FAWL honored Janet Reno, former attorney general of the United States, at its annual "Women Making History" Reception in Coral Gables on Mar. 25, 2010.

A graduate of Cornell University and Harvard Law School (one of only 16 female members of her class), Ms. Reno

*She spoke movingly of her vision of social justice and of the role that lawyers must play in building a just society.*

was born and raised in Miami-Dade County, where she graduated from Coral Gables High School as valedictorian and debating champion. Originally appointed state attorney for (then) Dade County, she was elected to the office of state

attorney in 1978 and was returned to that office by voters four more times. In 1993, she was nominated and confirmed as the first woman to hold the office of attorney general by a vote of 98-2. She remained attorney general for the duration of Bill Clinton's presidency and was the longest serving attorney general of the 20th century.

Now living in South Florida, Ms. Reno was joined by family and friends for the occasion. Several of those present recounted stories of their

experiences as young lawyers working for "Miss Reno" as state attorney. An exacting, but fair boss, "Miss Reno" could be relied upon to pass on a compliment and to share credit where credit was due.

Among those inspired by Ms. Reno was Julie Braman Kane, president of the Miami-Dade Chapter. Introducing Ms. Reno at the "Women Making History" Reception, Ms. Kane recalled her experience when, as a first-year law student at the University of Miami, Ms. Reno visited the school to meet with incoming female students, welcoming them into the legal profession with words of encouragement.

Graciously accepting the "Women Making History" Award, Ms. Reno was true to her reputation for encouraging words. She spoke movingly of her vision of social justice and of the role that lawyers must play in building a just society. Ms. Reno urged the audience to draw upon their own strengths and talents to help those facing the worst of these challenging times—repeating several times the mantra "Strength and Courage." ●

# FAWL Members Honored by The Florida Bar for Outstanding Commitment to Pro Bono Service

**F**AWL congratulates its several members throughout the state whose outstanding commitment to pro bono service has been recognized and honored this year by The Florida Bar.



**Caroline Kapusta Black**, recipient of the President's Pro Bono Service Award, is a partner with Mason, Black, and Cabellero PA in Tampa.

She has donated countless hours to pro bono representation of clients in cases involving divorce, custody, contested paternity, child support and domestic violence. She is an active member of Hillsborough Association for Women Lawyers.



**Monica Miller Evans**, recipient of the Young Lawyers Division Pro Bono Service Award, is an attorney with Messer, Caparello & Self

PA in Tallahassee. An active member of Tallahassee Women Lawyers, she has served as guardian ad litem and has advocated pro bono for numerous abused and neglected children.



**Juliette Ellen Lippman**, recipient of the President's Pro Bono Service Award, is a partner at Kirschbaum, Birnbaum, Lippman &

Gregoire PLLC in Fort Lauderdale. An active member of Broward County Women Lawyers, she has provided a wide range of pro bono legal services to physically and mentally disabled individuals.



**Kathleen C. Passidomo**, recipient of the President's Pro Bono Service Award, is a partner at Kelly Passidomo & Alba LLP in Naples. A

past president of the Collier County Women's Bar Association, she has been in the forefront of providing educational and legal services to victims of the foreclosure crisis.



**Robert Anthony Rush**, recipient of the President's Pro Bono Service Award, is a partner at Rush & Glassman in Gainesville. He has provided

countless hours of pro bono advocacy to disadvantaged youth and persons with disabilities.



**Monica Taibl**, recipient of the President's Pro Bono Service Award, is an assistant public defender and sole practitioner in Madison. A founding member

and secretary of the Third Circuit Association for Women Lawyers, she has accepted multiple and varied pro bono assignments through participation at Three Rivers Legal Services Inc. in Lake City. ●



## *Congratulations, Judge Clark*

FAWL congratulates **Judge Nikki Ann Clark**, First District Court of Appeal, recipient of the Distinguished Judicial Service Award for her outstanding and sustained leadership and support of pro bono legal services.

## The Hillsborough Association for Women Lawyers Mentoring Program 2009-2010

by Rachael Greenstein, Esq.

The Hillsborough Association for Women Lawyers Mentoring Program, established in 2005, matches law students at the Stetson University College of Law with practicing attorneys in the Tampa Bay area. Mentors are encouraged to answer questions and give advice about the

*This event was a huge success and resulted in 36 mentors and 46 mentees signing up to participate in the program.*

practical and substantive aspects of practicing law as well as to provide mentees with opportunities to observe their mentors in practice. The Mentoring Program is intended to help mentees transition out of law school and to provide them with a realistic impression of the practice of law.

The Mentoring Program held its Second Annual Speed Mentoring event in September. Prospective mentees were given five minutes to speak with each of the prospective mentors. Mentors and mentees were encouraged to discuss topics involving their interests in the law, hobbies and other general information

to help them choose the person with whom they wanted to be matched.

At the conclusion of the event, the attorneys and students anonymously ranked their top five choices. The two co-

chairwomen for the Mentoring Program, Rachael Greenstein and Victoria McCloskey, then matched the students and the attorneys based on their preferences, areas of practice, interests and schedules.

This event was a huge success and resulted in 36 mentors and 46 mentees

signing up to participate in the program. This is over a 41-percent increase from last year's participation, and the numbers are expected to grow! With the downturn in the economy and the scarcity of legal positions in the area, the Mentoring Program received a lot of interest from law students looking for alternative means for networking and receiving professional guidance.

In addition to the Speed Mentoring event, the Mentoring Program developed its first Shadow Day at the Courthouse event this past year with some assistance from several judges, including the Honorable Claudia Isom, the Honorable Emily Peacock and the Honorable Elizabeth Rice. Approximately 30 mentors and mentees attended the event. Many of the judges in the 13th Judicial Circuit also participated in the event by welcoming the mentors and mentees into their courtrooms. Mentees and mentors began the day with an informal breakfast mixer with the judges, followed by presentations from several court programs, including Hillsborough County's Mediation and Diversion Services. The mentors and mentees then toured the Hillsborough County George Edgecomb Courthouse and observed open court. The event concluded with a luncheon with the judges, where an open discussion ensued concerning topics such as courtroom decorum and lawyers' etiquette. The mentees were very enthusiastic about the event and truly appreciated the candor of their discussions with the judges.

The Mentoring Program intends to host a similar event next year due to the great response received from the mentees as well as the judges. When asked about the event, Judge Isom commented, "What a great opportunity for our mentees to get a behind-the-scenes view of our



*Thirty-six mentors and 46 mentees signed up for the Mentoring Program as a result of HAWL's Second Annual Speed Mentoring event.*

*Mentors and mentees spend five minutes getting to know each other during HAWL's Second Annual Speed Mentoring event.*

judicial system! I was impressed with the level of professionalism and maturity demonstrated by the mentees' questions and their approach to the shadow experience."

Judge Isom's mentee, Dara Cooley, who is president of the Florida Association for Women Lawyers at Stetson, remarked, "For some students, this was their first time visiting the courthouse. While the courthouse remains a colossal building, for most students, the intimidation has departed due to the warm welcome and personal interactions with judges and attorneys experienced during this unique opportunity."

All of these great events contribute to the continued success of the Mentoring Program. In August, the National Conference of Women's Bar Associations (NCWBA) will award the Mentoring Program with its Outstanding Member Program Award during the NCWBA Women's Bar Leader Summit. Furthermore, The Florida Bar's Young Lawyers Division recognized the Mentoring Program for its accomplishments during its Affiliate Outreach Conference in January. At the conference, the Young Lawyers Division awarded the Mentoring Program a grant for its Shadow Day at the Courthouse event and presented the program with the Most Outstanding Member Service Project Award. In years past, the Mentoring Program has received several other grants from the Young Lawyers Division for its Speed Mentoring Event and its Annual Recognition Banquet. With all of these achievements and accolades, the Hillsborough Association for Women Lawyers is optimistic that this program will carry on to assist future generations of law students while promoting professionalism in the practice of law.

*Rachael L. Greenstein is an assistant county attorney in Hillsborough County.* ●



## ***Mentoring: A Student's Perspective***

***by Dara Cooley, President, Florida Association for Women Lawyers at Stetson***

***"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, 'Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?' Actually, who are you not to be? Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others."***

Shortly after the HAWL Speed Mentoring Event, as the student members of the Florida Association for Women Lawyers at Stetson (FAWLS) awaited a welcoming email from their HAWL mentors, Hon. Claudia Isom sent the above passage from Marianne Williamson to me, her mentee. Being the president of FAWLS, I've used this inspirational message as the guidepost for the mentoring program, encouraging students to seek wisdom and support from their mentors.

During this year, I realized my own potential and the possibility of becoming a political figure or even a judge due to my mentor's determination to provide me with access to the right people and the right information to actualize this vision of myself. She opened my eyes to a new world of possibilities that prior, I might never have considered. This program is necessary not only for networking opportunities and career advice, but also for the reassurance of knowing there is a network of women out there who support you as a person. The level of passionate understanding the mentors and mentees exchange regarding the charted yet bumpy road that lies ahead for female lawyers makes this program unique.

A first-year law student shared with me that she was afforded the opportunity to speak with her mentor about the hurdles she had to overcome. Her mentor understood the challenges and provided the advice and encouragement the student needed to keep things in perspective and to forge ahead in building a stronger foundation for her legal career. Another student expressed gratitude for her mentor for carving out time in a demanding schedule to meet twice a month; this student treasured the breadth of their conversations. Another found confidence in a crowded room of legal professionals when a HAWL mentor, not even assigned to the student, extended a welcoming hand.

This program is about more than simply giving career advice or the how-to's for becoming a successful lawyer; this program is about true mentoring, sharing dreams and fears, as well as changing a mentee's perception of herself and her abilities. Our HAWL mentors are liberating us from our own reservations and self-limiting thoughts, and through their professional guidance and personal encouragement, our mentors are revealing to us our greatest potential as women lawyers. ●

## Miami-Dade FAWL Holds Inaugural Speed Mentoring Event

by Carly Hammond, Esq.

On Oct. 20, 2009, Miami-Dade FAWL kicked off its inaugural Mentoring Program with a Speed Mentoring event. Sixteen local attorneys and judges mingled with 38 students from four area law schools—University of Miami, Florida International University, Nova Southeastern University and St. Thomas University—at an event modeled after the phenomenon of “speed dating.” Mentors were divided into four groups and remained stationary while four groups of mentees traveled from one area to the next. At each station, the mentors and mentees had several minutes to speak with one another before moving on. At the end of the event, each mentor or mentee was asked to rank his or her potential matches in order of preference. In addition, persons who were not able to attend the event were asked to submit applications detailing their work experience, desired practice areas and the like. On this basis, the Mentoring Committee was able to match 48 students with mentors, a smashing success for its first year of the program.

Mentors and mentees alike enjoyed the Speed Mentoring event.

“I met dozens of bright, interesting students, and the setup was ideal for getting to know each of them,” says Shook Hardy & Bacon attorney and Miami-Dade FAWL Director Alexandra Bach Lagos.

Students found it was a rare chance to speak to practicing attorneys and judges in an informal setting, and they were grateful for the generosity of the mentors who donated their time, energy and guidance.

Says St. Thomas student Samantha Burmeister, “I thought it was absolutely



Sixteen attorneys and 38 law students gather for Miami-Dade FAWL's first Speed Mentoring event.



great and cannot wait to have more events, either with a mentor or in a group setting.”

The Speed Mentoring event kicked off Shadow Month, in which mentors and mentees who have been matched are encouraged to have their first face-to-face meetings in any setting they choose—for example, lunch, a tour of the office or judge’s chambers, sitting in on a hearing or a deposition or attending a networking event together. Many students have not yet been able to see what a lawyer’s or a judge’s day-to-day responsibilities entail and are anxious to take advantage of this opportunity. After their first in-person meetings, mentors and mentees may have as much phone or email contact as they wish throughout the remainder of the school year.

Going forward, the Mentoring Committee hopes to gain feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the program from the initial mentor-mentee group so that it can strengthen the program for next year’s participants. Also, the committee hopes to involve the Broward Chapter of FAWL in the future in hopes of broadening the reach of this effort.

Several students who requested a mentor have not yet been matched. If you are an attorney or a judge who would like to participate, please contact one of the co-chairwomen of the Mentoring Committee: Carly Hammond, Lott & Friedland PA, [chammond@lfiplaw.com](mailto:chammond@lfiplaw.com), 305/448-7089; or Maria Enriquez, Holland & Knight, [maria.enriquez@hklaw.com](mailto:maria.enriquez@hklaw.com), 305/789-7769. ●

## Lobby Days Provides Glimpse Into Legislative Process

by Robin I. Bresky, Esq.

State FAWL members participated in Lobby Days at our state's Capitol on Mar. 10, 2010. We began the afternoon with a fabulous luncheon hosted by Tallahassee Women Lawyers (TWL) at the Governor's Club in Tallahassee. It was a great opportunity to meet with FAWL members from around the state. In addition to the delicious food, the real treat was the speaker, Senator Nan Rich. A strong advocate for our state's children and seniors, Senator Rich gave us an update on current issues in the Legislature. Special thanks to Mia McKown, who introduced Senator Rich and then gave us a tour of the Capitol. (A great tip for next year: Wear comfortable shoes!)

After the tour, FAWL members were able to watch the Florida House of Representatives in action from our seats in the gallery, and Representative Maria Sachs gave us a special introduction to the House. We then had the opportunity to sit in on several committee sessions to see debate regarding the various issues



Gigi Rollini, FAWL president-elect, with Senator Nan Rich

in committee. It was a fantastic learning experience for all of us.

We continued the afternoon with our own business, holding our executive board meeting at the office of Holland and Knight. Thank you to President-elect Gigi Rollini for graciously providing us much needed drinks and snacks!

To round out the day, FAWL members attended a terrific dinner at the Hotel Duval, hosted again by TWL. The speakers were Florida Bar President Jesse Diner and Chief Justice Peggy

Quince. Both speakers provided an eye-opening look at the economic crisis facing the judiciary, the impact it may have on us as attorneys and what we all can do to work toward improvement.

Lobby Days provided FAWL members a chance to come together for a fascinating glimpse into the legislative process, an opportunity to learn from leaders in our profession and a great forum in which to network with each other. It is an event not to be missed, so we are looking forward to seeing you for Lobby Days 2011! ●

## Florida's Women Judges Attend Florida Judicial College



Pictured above are Florida's women judges appointed in 2010. The photo was taken at the Florida Judicial College-Phase I in Tallahassee. Back Row: Caroline Cahill Shepherd, Palm Beach County; Meenu Sasser, 15th Circuit; Jackie Lee Fulford, Second Circuit; Kathy Garner, Gadsden County; Gladys Perez, Miami-Dade County; and Barbara McCarthy, 17th Circuit. Front Row: Chief Justice Peggy Quince, Florida Supreme Court; and Justice Barbara Pariente, Florida Supreme Court. Not pictured is Dawn Caloca-Johnson, Second Circuit.

In Florida, all new judges have the opportunity to attend Florida Judicial College-Phase I and Phase II. This year, Florida Judicial College-Phase I was held in Tallahassee, Jan. 3-8, 2010. Phase II was held in Tampa, Mar. 21-26, 2010.

During Judicial College, new judges attend workshops on critical issues they will face on the bench, including issues involving ethics and how to handle various divisions. The judges also conduct a "mock trial," which usually involves a challenging factual scenario. ●

## Women in Legal Aid Programs Are Doing Good, *But Are They Doing Well?*

by Jennifer Hill and Lisette Losada, Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center;  
Lisette Labrousse, Legal Services of Greater Miami; and  
Cara Dobrev, Legal Services of the Orange County Bar Association

In 1964, the federal Legal Services Program was begun, solidifying a national commitment to access to justice for all. Sargent Shriver, the first director, envisioned attorneys collaborating with community organizations to address the systemic problems poor people face. The law would be used to make social change in an orderly manner.

Florida's legal aid programs have had tremendous impact, from *Silvey v. Roberts* in 1973, which established that public assistance recipients were entitled to a notice and hearing before prescription drug aid could be terminated, to *Lulac et al. v. Florida Board of Education et al.*, a 1990 case specifying educational rights of students with limited English proficiency. Day

in and day out, legal services attorneys have expanded the rights and access to justice of low-income women and families. From the beginning, women made up the majority in Florida's poor communities, making "poverty law" a field of special importance to women.

Now, women also make up a majority of legal services lawyers, and both the opportunities and the challenges they face are important issues for those concerned with women in law.

*There are roughly 400 legal services lawyers in the state. Of those, 73 percent are women.*

### An Opportunity and a Challenge

The Florida Bar Foundation funds 31 legal services providers, relying on interest on lawyers trust accounts funds and donations from the legal community. There are roughly 400 legal services lawyers in the state. Of those, 73 percent are women. This is a dramatic change. The increase has brought expanded opportunity—a slight majority of managers and directors are women, and women of color make up one-quarter of all legal services lawyers in Florida.

Marcia Cypen, executive director of Legal Services of Greater Miami (LSGMI), is a trailblazer. Ms. Cypen started as a law clerk at LSGMI in 1974. By 1983, she was executive director—the second female director of a federally funded legal services program in Florida. She believes "the legal services community was always a welcoming one for women attorneys, although not necessarily as executive directors."



There is an underside, however. The predominance of women in any professional subgroup tends to correspond with a decrease in relative pay. Thirty-two percent of Florida's lawyers overall are women, less than half the percent concentrated in legal aid. For already-underpaid legal aid lawyers, improving standards is critical.

A 2007 study focused on retention, noting that legal aid attorneys believe strongly their work is valuable. Nevertheless, annual turnover in recent years has been 20 percent, with more than half indicating they would leave within five years because of financial pressures. The 2007 median starting salary for an attorney was \$38,500, and it took nine years to reach a salary of more than \$50,000. Low salaries are compounded by high educational debt, with a median debt of more than \$110,000 for recent graduates. As of 2007, only roughly 60 percent received any debt assistance. As a result of the survey, the Bar Foundation and legal services programs have increased starting salaries to \$43,500, given modest annual increases and provided additional loan repayment assistance. Many programs also try to provide flexible scheduling and a family-friendly environment.

## Making a Difference

More than salary is at stake. Legal services attorneys balance great stress with great non-economic rewards. High-need clients and large case loads can make for a difficult work life. On the other hand, legal aid lawyers often have significant autonomy and report great personal satisfaction.

Jacina Parsons, an attorney with Legal Services of North Florida, works with victims of sexual violence. Her work "is emotionally draining and requires a great deal of patience, but it brings me joy to see a person go from victim to victorious."

The appeal of such rewarding work draws lawyers from all backgrounds. Tess Arington, director of intake at

Jacksonville Area Legal Aid (JALA), made the transition from a private firm. "The practice of employment law for poverty clients is quite different," Ms. Arington explains. "I went from federal wage cases valued in hundreds of thousands of dollars to quickly learning small claims court and negotiation tactics effective with disreputable employers so I could recover small amounts that were critical to my clients to avoid eviction. My eyes were opened to a different world."

Legal services attorneys are supplementing direct services with new approaches. One such approach, called "community lawyering," involves partnering with community groups and combining legal advocacy, education, communications, research and organizing to address systemic problems. "Legal services programs are playing a key role in the lives of low income women, immigrants and women of color—supporting their efforts to organize and struggle for their rights," comments Mary Gundrum, managing attorney at Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center (FIAC).

## The Next Generation

In January 2009, the first Leadership Development Institute (LDI) began, a 14-month program sponsored by the Bar Foundation. Fifteen mentor-fellow pairs worked to develop a shared vision, implement new projects and foster the sort of aggressive, creative advocacy that is the hallmark of great legal services lawyering.

"The Institute not only taught lawyers critical management and changing leadership skills, but firmly grounded us in legal services history as part of the civil rights movement and war on poverty, which are still ongoing 40 years after their inception," notes Ms. Arington, who volunteered to be a

mentor. "The passion and commitment demonstrated by the fellows was incredible. I know legal services clients throughout Florida will benefit."

For Dawn Bates-Buchanan, a fellow from Gulf Coast Legal Services, twin messages of responsibility and support were clear: "I was reminded that if a problem is affecting my client, there is a good chance that it is happening to others throughout Florida, and I am not alone in the fight."

## Legal Allies

Legal aid lawyers often work closely with private attorneys, who volunteer their

*Legal aid lawyers often have significant autonomy and report great personal satisfaction.*

time, offer advice or help raise funds. Pro bono attorneys, for example, provide essential assistance with transactional work, explains Carol Miller of JALA, helping community development corporations carry out "nonprofit real estate development in areas where deals are not feasible for the private market due to hurdles such as liens on property, title problems, environmental problems and poor infrastructure."

Lizzie Johnson, who handles consumer claims with Community Legal Services of North Florida, points out that pro bono attorneys often "bridge the gap" when more individuals qualify for services than can be helped, and thus "ensure many elderly and poor clients that justice will not pass them by."

"Women attorneys in legal services and private practice communicating their experiences and insights undoubtedly helps," says Aidil Oscariz, a children's advocate at the Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center. "It enhances not only our professional growth, but also builds a strong sense of community among female law practitioners." ●



# Grow Your Practice

by Paula Black

## *Want to grow your practice? You need a plan.*

**Y**ou can't increase business through random acts of marketing. In today's climate, every attorney needs a personal marketing plan. Here's why ...

*To succeed in today's competitive environment, you need a strategy—business isn't going to fall from the sky.*

There are more than 1,084,500 attorneys in this country. So, what makes a client choose you? It may be your experience, your skills, your relationships or simply

the little things that set you apart from your competition (otherwise known as your points of differentiation). But unless you're able to capitalize on those selling points and communicate them

to clients and potential clients, they're not doing you any good.

To succeed in today's competitive environment, you

need a strategy—business isn't going to fall from the sky. And it all starts with a marketing and business development plan. Consider this: A 2006 Managing Partner Forum audience survey showed

that 82 percent of law firms with a plan reported a direct correlation between planning and profitability. While the survey applied to law firms as a whole, those plans began with lawyers, were carried out by lawyers and were measured by lawyers' results. So, the lesson becomes ... You. Need. A. Plan.

Your marketing and business development plan should set forth what you plan to do over the next 12 months to build, enhance and maintain relationships with key clients. It should also include a set list of activities that will enhance your credentials and position you as an expert in your chosen area of law. The key is to keep it easy to incorporate into your daily



business activities. Your plan will be constantly changing and evolving, and it needs to be revisited and updated often.

So, where to start? First, think about your personal brand ... that is, your vision for your practice, your expertise, your experience and your strengths. Every great brand has an idea or a focus that sets it apart from everyone else, so what's yours? Look at the big picture when it comes to expanding and building on your personal brand, and it may spark ideas for your plan.

As we well know, the hardest part is getting started. For all of you out there without a plan, here are seven easy steps for putting together a first draft:

#### **1. Define your target market.**

You can't start on a journey if you don't know where you're going. First, define what kind of business you want to bring in and to whom you need to market. Having a group on which to focus will make it easier to speak directly to potential clients.

#### **2. Establish your credibility.**

Every attorney's goal should be to become a recognized expert in his or her area of the law. Google yourself and evaluate what comes up on the first page. Is that what you want potential clients to find? Take control of the information that's out there about you and your practice. Write articles, give speeches, get involved in social media and consider writing a book. Figure out which of those activities are most realistic in your day-to-day life and plan to spend a set amount of time on them each month.

#### **3. Focus on industries and related trade associations.**

Innovative attorneys are marketing their services to specific industries. Becoming active in one or two carefully targeted industry trade associations is key. Get your clients' input on which groups to look into, do your due diligence and plan to not only join in name but to become an active

member. The key here is spending the time getting to know people. Plain and simple, people hire lawyers they know and trust.

#### **4. Organize your contacts.**

Start with existing clients and referral sources. Sort your list by the following: "As" should be people who know what you do and refer you business; "Bs" should be those who know what you do but haven't yet sent you business; and "Cs" are those who would send you business if they had a better

*Focus on the 20 to 30 people that you can truly nurture as either clients or referral sources.*

understanding of what you do. Then expand and update the list to include people you come to know ... or want to get to know.

#### **5. Invest in key relationships.**

It's a well-known adage that you can't be everything to everyone. Focus on the 20 to 30 people that you can truly nurture as either clients or referral sources. Don't ignore the rest ... just spend the bulk of your networking time on that select group.

#### **6. Include regular visits to top clients.**

Ask questions, listen, learn and respond appropriately. Take an interest in their business, and it will reap rewards. Great client service is the easiest way to get new business because happy clients want to give you more work and send referrals.

#### **7. Hold yourself accountable.**

The idea here is to set specific goals. How many clients are you going to call each day? How many prospects are you going to make lunch plans with per week? How many articles are you going to write per month? Find a way to measure your results. You'll be better able to see what works ... and what doesn't.

A few other tips to remember: If you start with too much, you'll end up spinning your wheels. Your goals and strategies must be realistic and achievable ... you can always add to the plan later. As a rule, I like to tell clients to state strategies and tactics that are specific, measurable and achievable within one year. Also, always remember that this is a journey, not a sprint. You have to have patience and confidence; realize that if you stick with it, your hard work will pay off.

It all starts with a plan! Set goals, stay focused, have fun and most important ... do something every single day! ●

#### **About the Author**

To receive Paula Black's legal marketing and business ideas, visit *In Black & White* ([www.inblackandwhiteblog.com](http://www.inblackandwhiteblog.com)) and have twice-weekly posts delivered directly to your inbox. For more information on Paula Black, her books and her company, please visit [www.paulablacklegalmarketing.com](http://www.paulablacklegalmarketing.com).



### Broward County Women Lawyers Association

by Rene Harrod, BCWLA President

On Dec. 3, 2009, BCWLA hosted the first holiday judicial reception of the season and collected many toys for the children and mothers of a local nonprofit center for victims of domestic violence called Women in Distress. The 2010 year started off well with a Jan. 13 luncheon called "View From the Bench," which featured a panel discussion by five local judges of differing divisions. And on Feb. 27, 2010, the BCWLA was named an Outstanding Community Partnership honoree by the PACE Center for Girls, a local nonprofit devoted to helping at-risk girls succeed.

### Central Florida Association for Women Lawyers

by Linda Brehmer Lanosa, CFAWL Public Relations Coordinator

CFAWL is an unbelievably active group of amazingly talented and energetic lawyers, attorneys and judges.

On Feb. 10, 2010, CFAWL held its annual Professional Women's Exchange, which drew about 300 participants from various professions. A portion of the proceeds benefited A Place for Children.

On Mar. 11, 2010, CFAWL hosted a Judicial Reception, which was a huge success thanks to the committee members and sponsors and to all of the judges and members who battled the rain to enjoy the opportunity to get to know our judiciary in a setting other than the courtroom.

Our February luncheon featured Doug Gaskins, a principal partner in the Business Appraisal Group LLC, who spoke on the issue of using business valuations for business and litigation planning. For our March luncheon, Betty Lowrey from Walt Disney World spoke on "How Talented Women Survive" and how women becoming leaders and taking on leadership roles can lead to improved financial stability. In April, we had Mayanne Downs, attorney for the City of Orlando and The Florida Bar's president-elect, speak to us on "Women in the Legal Profession" and how women can build their practices. We also held our annual Administrative Assistants' Luncheon for attorneys and their assistants in April.



Bridget Hefferman Labutta and Christine Arendas, co-chairwomen of the CFAWL Professional Women's Exchange event

Some of the recent programs have included a Mentoring Mingle, a ceramic party at Amazing Glaze Ceramics Studio and our very popular Tables for Eight.

Denise Lyn and A. Patricia Barwick prepare for Attorney Advice Day in the Citrus County Community Center.



### Women's Bar of Citrus and Hernando

by Courtney D. Durham, Women's Bar of Citrus and Hernando President

The Women's Bar, now in its second year, has eight members from Citrus and Hernando counties. Meetings are intended to be held quarterly.

On Nov. 4, 2010, the Women's Bar hosted an Attorney Advice Day at which members of the community could meet with a lawyer and get some free advice. It was hosted at the Citrus County Community Center, where six volunteer attorneys served a steady procession of individuals. The participating attorneys were Courtney D. Durham, Denise Lyn, Dale Marie Merrill, A. Patricia Barwick, Diane Cohen and Kristal L. Knox. Some of the legal issues addressed were based on contract, foreclosure, family and even copyright law. Many of the questions presented to the attorneys could be resolved quickly by providing the attendees with the information they needed to resolve the matters on their own. Other individuals had problems for which some of the attorneys committed to providing a few more pro bono hours to resolve. Still others who had more complex legal matters were provided with the information they needed to decide whether or not they wanted to pursue the matters legally. We hope to hold this event again and partner with the local Community Legal Services to get even more participation.

At the December 2009 meeting, the Women's Bar established an award called "Over the Bar" for a local female attorney whose efforts have paved the way for attorneys after her and decided to award the first of these awards to Hernando County Magistrate Gerrie Bishop.

### Hillsborough Association for Women Lawyers

by Kelly Chanfrau, HAWL President

HAWL recently approached the Judicial Nominating Committee (JNC) for the 13th Judicial Circuit and is excited to announce that it will be providing diversity training to the JNC regarding tips on interview questions for potential judicial candidates. HAWL will provide a live diversity training session to the JNC prior to its next session. The training will be provided by HAWL's president, Kelly Chanfrau, an employment lawyer with Ford & Harrison LLP.

Word got around regarding the HAWL's offer to provide diversity training to the 13th Judicial Circuit's JNC, and HAWL was asked to provide written diversity training materials to the JNC for the Seventh

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For information about sponsorship opportunities, call 850/894-0055 or visit [www.fawl.org](http://www.fawl.org) and click on "Resources for the Public" and then "Sponsor Opportunities."

# FAWL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 25-30, 2010  
**The Florida Bar Board of  
Governors Meeting**  
Key West, Fla.

June 23-26, 2010  
**FAWL Board Meeting**  
*in conjunction with*  
**The Florida Bar Annual Meeting**  
Boca Raton Resort  
Boca Raton, Fla.



## *"Chapter News" continued from page 14*

Judicial Circuit. HAWL has prepared written diversity training materials regarding appropriate topics for questioning by JNCs and would be interested in providing these materials to any interested Florida JNCs. Those wishing to obtain more information should contact Kelly Chanfrau, Ford & Harrison LLP, 101 E. Kennedy Boulevard, Ste. 900, Tampa, FL 33602, kchanfrau@fordharrison.com, 813/261-7814.

## **Tallahassee Women Lawyers**

*by Jennifer Sullivan Davis, TWL  
FAWL Chapter Representative*

**T**WL kicked off its nationally recognized and award-winning Women's Empowerment Series, entitled "Inspired to Inspire Change in our Professional, our State, and our Nation" on Jan. 13, 2010, when it welcomed Professor Luz Nagle, a law professor at Stetson University College of Law and recipient of the 2009 Freedom

Award from the Coalition Against Human Trafficking.

On Feb. 10, 2010, TWL continued its Empowerment Series by celebrating the accomplishments of TWL members: First District Court of Appeal Judge Nikki Ann Clark and attorneys Monica Evans with Messer Caparello & Self and Wendy Loquasto with Fox & Loquasto PA. Next in the series was "Inspiring Advancement in the Legal Profession," presented on Apr. 14.

On Mar. 10, 2010, TWL co-hosted its Annual Lobby Day with FAWL, which focused

on Florida's 2010 legislative process and opportunities for members to participate.

On Apr. 6, 2010, TWL kicked off its Breakfast & Books program at the Pace Center for Girls, which will be followed by a Book Share & Lunch program on May 18.

In July 2010, TWL will induct its 30th anniversary year officers: Twyla Sketchley (president); Jennifer Sullivan Davis (president-elect); Lindsey Lawton (secretary); Jessica Leigh (treasurer); Aubrey Posey (public relations director); Meghan B. Daigle (programs director); Carly Schrader (CLE director); Catherine Chapman (judicial reception chairwoman); Trudy Innes-Richardson (development director); Stephanie Williams-Ray (mentoring director); Ellen Pappas (FAWL chapter representative); and Gigi Rollini (immediate past president).



*Left: Florida Chief Justice Peggy Quince and Florida Bar President Jesse Diner with (from left to right) FAWL Lobby Day participants Twyla Sketchley, Trudy Innes-Richardson, Robin Bresky, Jennifer Davis, Gigi Rollini, Virginia Christy, Aubrey Posey, Kim Driggers and Kelly O'Keefe (photo by Judge June C. McKinney)*

## **South Palm Beach County FAWL**

*by Angelina Namia, SPBC FAWL Public  
Relations Coordinator*

**O**n Feb. 25, 2010, the South Palm Beach County Chapter of FAWL hosted a Judicial Reception at Old Calypso in Delray to honor Palm Beach County's judges and magistrates. The event had a wonderful turnout, and everyone who attended had a great time. Thank you to everyone who helped to organize this wonderful and fun event and a special thank you to all of the judges and magistrates who attended! ●



*Above: SPBC FAWL welcomes judges and magistrates to its Judicial Reception on Feb. 25, 2010.*