

The Official Journal of
Minnesota Women Lawyers



MWL is Pleased
to Welcome
2019-2020
President
Amy Taber

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**The MWL
Community
Inside and Out**

From the President



Amy Taber

The Power of Community

By Amy Taber
2019-2020 MWL President

When you hear the word Community, what do you think of? We all belong to many different communities—our neighborhood community, our work community, our church community, our family community, the legal community, just to name a few. When I hear the word community, I think of four distinct communities that have been key in my life.

The first community I think of is where I grew up -- a small town in Iowa, Tipton, population 3000. Since I was young at the time, I didn't recognize the importance of, or appreciate, this community to the extent I do now. It wasn't until after my mom passed away in 1991 that I realized how significant that community was to me and my family. You see, after my dad passed away in 1972, at the age of 30 from leukemia, and my mom was diagnosed with Rheumatoid Arthritis shortly after he died, she moved me and my three younger siblings back to Tipton in 1974, where I was born 10 years earlier. That community helped my mom, as our only parent, raise the four of us. That community also helped me and my siblings watch over and care for my mom, and allowed her to stay in our house until the day she passed away despite the crippling effects of RA.

The second community is Knowles--fifth floor of Maple Hall at Iowa State University. For financial reasons, I began college at ISU in January 1982 in place of finishing my final semester of high school. My best friend and her parents drove me to Ames in a terrible winter storm and dropped me off. I remember sitting in my dorm room and feeling overwhelmed and alone, so I walked down the long hallway

to the lounge, which was empty. I turned on the television and sat down, alone. After a little time passed, a woman walked in and introduced herself, acknowledging that I must be a new addition to the floor. Shortly after that, another woman came in, sat down, and introduced herself. As we talked, I shared I'd just arrived at ISU to start college and was working to figure out all the things I needed to do in the next few days, including registering for classes, securing my meal ticket, finding health services, and other orientation-related tasks. I met many of the women on Knowles by hanging out in the lounge and recall everyone being extremely kind, welcoming and helpful. Quickly, the women of Knowles became a community that supported me through my transition from high school to college and a place where I made many good friends over the three and half years I lived on Knowles. Nearly 40 years later, my Knowles community and the friendships formed remain near and dear to me. Seven alums of Knowles had a reunion in Ames in 2017 and we have another planned for this fall.

The third community is Houston, Texas. In 1987, I transferred to Houston from Iowa with my first job out of college—I was 23. I knew no one in Houston and had never visited Houston, but I had relatives in Dallas and had visited them several times. I remember thinking, "I like Dallas. How much different could Houston be?" Answer—Really different!! Houston was such a melting pot and, although it took some time to integrate, my work community quickly served as an essential element of my personal development and enjoyment of living in Houston. Although I came to love Houston and feel part of the community, I transferred back to Iowa in 1988 so I could be closer to my mom given her health.

The last community I think of is Minnesota Women Lawyers, which has been an extremely important community to me, both personally and professionally. I moved to Minnesota from Iowa 30 years ago and was not a lawyer at that time;

being a lawyer hadn't even crossed my mind at that point in my life. Being a transplant from Iowa and knowing only a few people when I moved to Minnesota, trying to meet new people, make new friends and integrate into the community was difficult. Unlike Houston, most everyone I met was born and raised in Minnesota and everyone seemed to have well-established, tight-knit communities that were extremely hard to break into as a transplant.

Then, when I became a lawyer at the age of 40, integrating into the legal community was a whole new experience and challenge. I only knew a few lawyers, and I knew even less about law firms. Thankfully, a senior female partner came into my office one day after I'd been practicing a few years, sat down in a chair across from me and said, "Amy, you need to get involved in MWL." Thanks to that "nudge," I immediately got involved as a committee co-chair and began meeting and getting to know other women lawyers, judges, law students and legal professionals within the legal community.

The MWL Community

By being part of the MWL community, I have met countless, amazing women, made many friends, built leadership skills and learned to be a better lawyer. I have also learned how important it is to give back to this community through pro bono work and volunteering. As reflected by the articles in this issue of With Equal Right, this is true for so many of our members who are involved in various activities within the community. I found a quote by Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg that is perfectly on point:

"Whatever community organization, whether it's a women's organization, or fighting for racial justice ... you will get satisfaction out of doing something to give back to the community that you never get in any other way."

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Community is essential to MWL's mission. Community is essential to MWL's success. Community is essential to us all.

As MWL President, I am committed to practicing radical welcomeness to all women lawyers, whether they are new to Minnesota or new to the legal community, and ensuring MWL provides a community that helps woman lawyers integrate into and navigate within the community so they feel welcomed, connected, supported and valued.

Just as I did at MWL's 48th Annual Meeting, I, again, invite everyone to join me in practicing radical welcomeness each day so MWL can engage and celebrate a diverse community and advance the success of women lawyers. ■

About Amy

Amy Taber is Prime Therapeutics' Employment and Litigation Senior Legal Counsel where she provides legal advice and support to Prime's human resources and facilities teams and assists with oversight of Prime's employment and general business litigation activities. Amy began practicing law in 2004 and was a partner at Barnes & Thornburg LLP before joining Prime. Prior to becoming a lawyer, she was a human resources professional for 10 years. Since joining the MWL Board as a Director in 2012, Amy has served in the role of Secretary and President-Elect. Amy is also a two-time recipient of the Service to MWL Award.

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Mentoring in the Legal Community



Gloria Stamps-Smith

By Gloria Stamps-Smith

Gloria Stamps-Smith is an Assistant County Attorney at the Office of the Hennepin County Attorney. Gloria is a Past President of the Minnesota Association of Black Lawyers, and also served as the Minnesota Representative for the National Black Prosecutors Association. Gloria is also a member of MWL's 2019-2020 Advisory Board.

Editors Note: At it's Annual Meeting in May 2019, the Hennepin County Bar Association (HCBA) recognized attorneys with its 2019 HCBA Excellence Awards. These Awards honor HCBA members for their service to the local legal profession, the community, and the association. Gloria Stamps-Smith was among this year's Award recipients, specifically in recognition for her mentoring efforts throughout the legal and greater community. Minnesota Women Lawyers asked Gloria what this Award meant to her.

I was extremely honored, but this award felt like something I was receiving for doing what comes naturally. As a child growing up in segregated Mississippi, I did not personally know any attorneys but was intimately familiar with the work of the great ones; Thurgood Marshall, Constance Baker Motley and the host of Civil Rights lawyers I saw routinely on television. For a little African American girl, these people seemed larger than life and their work directly impacted me. I was grateful for their sacrifices.

Through the ninth grade I attended a neighborhood school where the overwhelming majority of my teachers looked like me. The teachers instilled in me a sense of belonging and inspiration. My parents valued education and understood how it could change the outcome of one's life. They always told me that I can do whatever I want to do and no one can stop me from achieving my goals if I work hard, have faith, and treat others with respect.

The community I grew up in was one where everyone was familiar with each other and took care of each other. I knew that if my parents were not around, other adults and young people in the neighborhood would fill in the gap. That sense of community gave me the framework to understand that we are each responsible for each other's well-being.

I took that understanding to law school in Iowa where I met a group of women who continue to be my closest friends to this day. We took care of each other, studied together, cried together when school or life generally brought disappointments and we leaned on each other for everything. I taught them how to drive and cook. When I got married after my first year of law school and moved sixty miles away, they let me sleep on their couches to alleviate the commute. We encouraged and mentored each other.

When I moved to Minnesota, I established friendships through the Minnesota Minority Lawyers Association (MMLA), the predecessor to the Minnesota Association of Black lawyers (MABL). The lawyers from that organization embraced me and helped me in navigating my career.

I was the recipient of mentoring which reinforced my penchant for guiding others in life. I truly believe in Shirley Chisolm's words:

"Service is the rent we pay for room on this earth".

I have an obligation to give back, so mentoring came easily for me. Everyone's success impacts and improves the community whether it's purposeful or not. I can recall being in a courtroom where someone brought their daughter to observe and on that particular day the prosecutor, defense attorney, court reporter and judge were all African American women. That ignited a spark in that little girl and now she is a very successful attorney.

For most of my career I was the first African American in the role. As a teenager, I was the first African American clerk in a major department store, the first full time African American woman hired by the Minneapolis City Attorney's office and the first African American attorney hired by the Tennessee Board of Professional Responsibility. Each of these roles brought the responsibility to do the job with excellence in order to ensure opportunities would be available for the next person of color.

I believe I must do whatever is necessary to leave the world better than I found it. For me that involves not just leadership but also creating leaders. I have had the honor of mentoring amazing young people over the course of my career. I am constantly in awe of their success and grateful to have had even a small role in that success. Many positive experiences have developed through mentoring people I would not otherwise have gotten to know, or being affiliated with other organizations and groups. These relationships have helped me to encourage my mentees to think beyond traditional roles in their careers which may be less glamorous but it might provide unexpected opportunities. Mentoring is a full life experience that is not limited to the law. I enjoy working with children and youth. I purposefully align myself with organizations that promote their success whether through summer internships, clerkships, educational opportunities, or social engagement.

Mentoring plays a vital role in our community. I have found that mentoring and playing an influential role in the career path someone with less experience than me, whether in their lives or careers, has been an incredible opportunity for me to grow. I would encourage others who are able to take someone under their wing to do so.

The recent award for the Hennepin County Bar Association is an honor that I will regard not by placing it on a shelf for adoration and self-importance, but, rather for motivation to continue to do my small part in helping the bar association continue to more inclusive and accepting of attorneys from various backgrounds with a depth of diverse life experiences.

I owe this Award and my professional growth to the many professional organizations that have help shape my career path including MABL, HCBA, The Infinity Project, and MWL. ■

Serving the Community Through Board Service



Anne G. Brown

By Anne G. Brown

Anne G. Brown is a partner at Sjoberg & Tebelius, P.A. (Woodbury, Minnesota). She practices mainly in the areas of employment law, guardianship/conservatorships, and contract disputes.

A year ago, I hit some milestones in my life—not the least of which was becoming an “empty nester.” I couldn’t believe I was actually longing for those days of early Saturday practices, choir concerts, play rehearsals, and dinners on the fly. Life had become work, Netflix, and dinner out once a week. When did I get so old? I needed a shake-up, and I looked for that in my community—most specifically by getting more involved with MWL and becoming one of fifteen board members for Canvas Health.

Canvas Health is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. If you’re not familiar with this nonprofit organization, it is one of the most distinctive community mental health agencies in Minnesota—serving children, adolescents, adults and even entire families—and it has become the “go to” place for complex cases. So much so, many of its referrals come from therapists at other organizations.

I sought out involvement with Canvas Health (formerly Human Services, Inc., or “HSI”) because I was already familiar with its work as a result of my previous position in the juvenile court system. Many of my clients were court ordered to participate in Canvas Health’s anger management classes, counseling services, and chemical and mental health evaluations.

But what I’ve learned since becoming a member of the board is how much more comprehensive its services are and how well it serves our community. Including all of the above, it also offers:

- Psychiatric services
- Individual, couples, and family therapy as well as support groups
- Sexual assault prevention education programs
- Abuse response 24-hour crisis line
- Substance use treatment services including assessments, Rule 25, consultations, treatment, and family programming.
- Adult and adolescent day treatment and intensive support groups
- Case management services
- Mobile Crisis Lines for Scott, Anoka, Chisago, Isanti, Pine, Kanabec and Mille Lacs counties
- Telehealth - mental health and substance use therapy via smartphone or webcam
- Early childhood services
- School-based mental health and substance use services
- Service coordination for seniors
- Vocational, housing and supportive services

In short, Canvas Health’s vision is to improve the health and stability of communities through the strengthening of their individual members, and I’m so proud to be a part of it.

My role as a board member is to assist in the evaluation of programs—how well they’re working, how they can be expanded, and (sadly) when they must be terminated. The latter is typically the result of a lack of funding. For example, the Crisis Connection program (the local response center for the suicide hotline) and the Txt4Life program (the suicide prevention text program geared toward teens) were recently discontinued for a current lack of state funding and farmed outside of the community, despite the fact they were taking approximately 50,000 and 11,000 in local calls/texts per year, respectively.

To keep other programs from suffering similar fates, part of my role is to assist with fundraising through various community events, like the Canvas Health Golf Classic (July 22, Dellwood Country Club), the Stomp Out Suicide 5K Walk/Run (August 17, Goodview Park, Wyoming, MN), and the Valley Vine & Harvest Throwdown chef competition (October 13, Lake Elmo Inn Event Center).

I find tremendous gratification in working with a diverse group of people who share a passion for improving chemical and mental health in Minnesota. While I think we can all agree chemical and mental health is important, Canvas Health puts its money (and heart and soul) where its mouth is, and for that I count myself both lucky and proud. ■



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From an Island to a Community



Kristin Haugen

By Kristin Haugen

A solo attorney, Kristin Haugen helps emerging companies and established businesses to navigate intellectual property and business laws. Kristin also founded Rock Solid Consultants LLC to provide individual attorneys with business development, practice management and leadership coaching; and organizations with diversity, inclusion and culture workshops.

“There is nothing on this earth more to be prized than true friendship.” -Thomas Aquinas

They say it takes a village, and at the beginning I was a village of one. I left the comfort and security of law school to strike out on my own, in a new place, where I was completely unknown. A transplant from the East Coast, I moved to Minnesota fresh out of law school knowing no one, but optimistic about the Twin Cities’ great people and weather. (Well, maybe not the weather, but definitely the people!) Minnesota did not disappoint.

Starting my career at Briggs and Morgan, I was immediately encouraged to join MWL but hesitated. I had grown up very much a tomboy spending most of my youth with my older brother and male friends and, later, most of college and law school hanging with the guys; I was unsure about joining a “women’s” organization. Nevertheless, I did as I was told. I joined MWL not knowing much about the organization or how it would fit me and my life. At first, I went to some of MWL’s events like the Rosalie Wahl Leadership Lecture, member socials, and a CLE class. I was impressed by the warmth and energy of the organization.

Next came MWL’s Committee Fair featuring all the committees and affinity groups that MWL has to offer. I went from one to another thinking that each was more interesting than the last. Ultimately, I decided to join a committee because I thought it would give me the opportunity to see committee members regularly and to develop those relationships over time. It’s amazing how quickly you get to know someone when you’re in the trenches working on a project together. I quickly began to feel at home and looked forward to every meeting with these new friends.

Attending a new event can be intimidating but, regardless of what event I attended, there was always someone I could count on seeing: Deb Pexa, MWL’s Executive Director. She would warmly welcome me as if we had been friends for decades (and now we have!). She seems to have this encyclopedic knowledge and immediate recall with everyone she meets. How she could remember not only my name, but important details about my family, work, hobbies, ups and downs is beyond me, but it was reassuring to know she would always be there if ever I needed her.

The more events I attended, and committees I joined, the more my network grew. It included law students, freshly minted attorneys, mid-level and senior attorneys as well as judges and those active in the law but not actively practicing. Large firm, small firm, solo, government, in house attorneys – MWL had them all.

As my network grew, I started to realize some of the value of MWL. Those at my level could sympathize with the ups and downs of a newbie lawyer. We could commiserate or celebrate together. Those more advanced were incredibly generous with their time and experience. They were role models and shared their insiders’ view of who to know, what to do, and how to climb the ladder (in my case, to partnership). They gave selflessly, investing in me and creating a strong bond between us.

Fast forward to when I had my first child. I put on a brave face but was completely overwhelmed (and sleep deprived). I had no idea how I would juggle everything while somehow nurturing a tiny human being who was completely dependent upon me for EVERYTHING.

Fortunately, I discovered MWL’s Professional Parents affinity group which became a vital lifeline for me. This group of professional women included some who were similarly struggling (I took comfort in knowing I was not alone in my struggles) and others who had successfully raised children older than me and were willing to light the way. We bonded quickly and before I knew it, I had become one of the more experienced members, sharing my tips and tricks with the next group of parents.

Over the years, I became increasingly confident in my abilities and increasingly involved in MWL. I started co-chairing a committee and eventually graduated to working on task forces, strategic planning, and ultimately joined the Board of Directors. With each new role, project or committee, I met more and more MWL members and always discovered common ground on which to bond. Now, nothing delights me more than meeting new people and introducing them to others that I know they will value and enjoy. In this way, I am able to pay forward some of the kindness and generosity shown to me.

Eventually, I left Briggs and Morgan and formed my own firm. Suddenly, I found myself in unfamiliar territory, but I knew just where to go. After just one MWL Solo/Small Firm meeting, I had a group of attorneys sharing tips and eager to help me succeed. These attorneys offer encouragement, brainstorm solutions, and celebrate successes big and small. The camaraderie is incredible.

Some keep the professional and the personal completely separate. For me, the line blurred and disappeared. MWL is my community. They are the people who know me best and to whom I turn in times good and bad. I came to Minnesota completely alone and now have one of the most extensive families I could ever imagine. As Maya Angelou once said, “Family isn’t always blood. It’s the people in your life who want you in theirs; the ones who accept you for who you are; the ones who would do anything to see you smile and who love you no matter what.” I can’t imagine my life without MWL. ■



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MWL Leadership News



MWL Releases its FY18-19 Annual Report

MWL is pleased to present the MWL FY18-19 Annual Report. This report highlights a thriving organization thanks to the dedication of our members and the tremendous support of the legal community. Although this Annual Report can neither capture the full extent of MWL's accomplishments this past year, we believe it tells the story of a robust and welcoming organization that is making meaningful progress in its efforts to advance the success of women attorneys.

Find the full report online at: www.mwlawyers.org



MWL Solo & Small Firm Affinity Group pictured at their 2019 Summer Social

The MWL Solo & Small Firm Practitioner Affinity Group Summer Social

On August 13, 2019 the MWL Solo and Small Firm group hosted their annual summer social at Salut Bar Americain in St. Paul. Thank you to all who were able to attend and kick off MWL's new fiscal year! The group plans to continue to meet on the first Friday of every month to discuss issues of common interest. All are welcome to attend.

Find a complete listing of upcoming MWL events at:
www.mwlawyers.org/events

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The 25th Annual MWL Rosalie Wahl Leadership Lecture

Minnesota Women Lawyers (MWL) is pleased to announce its 25th Annual Rosalie Wahl Leadership Lecture to be held on the evening of Wednesday, October 23, 2019 at Prime Therapeutics (2900 Ames Crossing Road, Eagan).

The evening will begin with a general reception from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Hors d'oeuvres and drinks will be provided. (Each attendee will receive one drink ticket; subsequent drinks will be available via a cash bar). The program will be held from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m., with a dessert reception to follow immediately after the program.

A Seat at the Table: Women Attorneys Achieving Success and Building Community

When Rosalie Wahl was appointed by Governor Rudy Perpich to the Minnesota Supreme Court in 1977, she became the first woman jurist to be seated on the State's highest court. Upon her retirement from that court in 1994, MWL was honored to create the Justice Rosalie Wahl Leadership Lecture. From its inception and each year since, the Wahl Lecture series has featured women leaders from across the state and nation whose decisions and abilities have inspired the leaders of tomorrow, just as Justice Wahl inspired so many of us.

This year, as we commemorate MWL's 25th Annual Wahl Lecture, please join us to honor Justice Wahl, and to celebrate Minnesota women leaders who not only have a seat at the table, but are also change agents in their own communities. Learn how they attained their success and why "giving back" is so central to their achievements. Discover how inclusion drives their efforts and hear their personal thoughts on how we can advance our own success, and at the same time, impact the success of our broader communities.

MWL is pleased to welcome Luz Maria Frias of The Savvy Coach, who will offer initial keynote remarks, and then moderate a conversation with a tremendous panel of speakers:

- Ann Anaya, Chief Diversity Officer, 3M Corporation
- The Honorable Anne McKeig, Associate Justice, Minnesota Supreme Court
- Karen Wilson Thissen, Executive Vice President and General Counsel, Ameriprise
- Karla Vehrs, Office Managing Partner, Ballard Spahr LLP

The evening will also include a presentation of the MWL Foundation Law Student Scholarships, a live auction to benefit the MWL Foundation, and recognition of MWL's support of the Rosalie Wahl Pro Bono Attorney's office at Tubman East.

Registration & Sponsorship Opportunities

2019 Wahl Lecture registration is available at www.mwlawyers.org. Information about sponsorship opportunities is also available. Please contact MWL Membership and Communications Coordinator Hannah Zuercher for more information. (hzyercher@mwlawyers.org).

The Rosalie Wahl Leadership Lecture was established on the occasion of Justice Wahl's retirement from the Minnesota Supreme Court. The goal of the lecture is to honor Justice Wahl, by recognizing women leaders who have broken ground, while pointing the way for women who will follow.

The MWL Wahl Lecture Celebrates 25 Years!



5th Annual Wahl Lecture (1999)
(Left to right): Jacqueline Mrachek, Justice Rosalie Wahl, Keynote Speaker Martha Barnett, Judge M. Jacqueline Regis and Debra Pexa



7th Annual Wahl Lecture (2001)
(Left to right): Lisa Brabbit, Keynote Speaker Judge Diana Murphy, Justice Rosalie Wahl and Sara Schwes



20th Annual Wahl Lecture (2014)
(Left to right): Keynote Speaker Paulette Brown, the Honorable Walter Mondale and Pam Rochlin



24th Annual Wahl Lecture (2018)
(Left to right): Amy Taber, Keynote Speaker Elaine Weiss, Shannon Harmon and Kendra Brodin

MWL 100 % Club: Levander, Gillen & Miller

By: Bridget McCauley Nason

Bridget McCauley Nason is a partner at LeVander, Gillen & Miller. A graduate of the University of Minnesota School of Law and Loyola University of Chicago, Bridget practices primarily in the area of municipal law, representing cities in both civil legal matters as well as criminal prosecution. Bridget is a Past-President of MWL, and the current President-Elect of the MWL Foundation.

LEVANDER, GILLEN & MILLER, P.A.

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Located in South St. Paul, LeVander, Gillen & Miller is a fourteen-attorney law firm focused on representing municipal clients as well as individuals and businesses. Celebrating its 90th Anniversary this year, LeVander, Gillen & Miller PA is proud of its rich history, and as one of the oldest, continuously existing law firms in the State of Minnesota, the LeVander firm exemplifies the advancement of women in the legal profession and stands as a direct reflection of the monumental strides made by women in the legal profession.

From its humble beginnings in 1929, the LeVander firm has quietly earned a reputation for excellence and has established itself as a cornerstone of Minnesota law and politics. What is now the law firm of LeVander, Gillen & Miller began in 1929 when two young attorneys, fresh out of law school, hung their shingle outside a small office in the cattle district of South St. Paul. These two young men, Harold Stassen and Elmer Ryan, went on to lead distinguished careers in law, politics, and public service, and left a lasting impact -- not only in Minnesota, but throughout the world.

In the years that followed, this small, unassuming firm earned a distinctive reputation for leadership and commitment to public service by producing two Minnesota governors, a United States Senator, a United States Congressman, two Minnesota Supreme



The MWL members at LeVander, Gillen & Miller

Court justices, a chief federal judge, an administrative law judge, and many other distinguished leaders and legal minds.

Although the composition of the Firm in its early years reflected the near absence of women in the legal profession, in the last three decades, the Firm's gender composition has dramatically changed. The addition of women to the firm and the significant changes that followed are testaments to the Firm's commitment to gender equity and the advancement of its female attorneys. After hiring its first female associate attorney in 1990, by 1997, the firm's female associates and new hires significantly outnumbered their male counterparts. In 1999, the firm elected its first female shareholders: Tona Dove and Angela Amann. This was the beginning of a new era in the firm's history, and today the Firm's fourteen attorneys include seven male and seven female attorneys. Moreover, the Firm's female shareholders serve in a variety of leadership roles on the Firm's Board of Directors, and comprise fifty percent of the membership on the Firm's Finance and Management Committee.

For more than twenty years, MWL has been an integral partner with the Firm as it worked to advance the success of its female attorneys and to best serve its clients and the community. Over the past two decades, many of LeVander's attorneys have been involved in a variety of capacities within MWL, including serving in various leadership roles from committee co-chairs to President of the organization. The Firm's female attorneys have benefited from the wide variety of opportunities for professional development, leadership growth, and

ability to work to advance equity and inclusion in the profession presented by membership in MWL.

Attorney Cassie Wolfgram serves on MWL's Partner Leadership Council, and has engaged with MWL in a variety of capacities during the past year, stating "I appreciate our firm promotes membership in MWL. Participation in MWL has provided me the opportunity to meet other female attorneys in the state and celebrate their successes. Women before us have fought hard to be treated as equal to men in our field, but nationally, women still lag behind in becoming partners and shareholders. MWL fights to break down those barriers and give women equal opportunities in the legal field."

As a longstanding supporter of MWL, both as a member of the 100% Club as well as a Bronze Partner, LeVander values its relationship with MWL and the support it provides to the Firm and its attorneys through professional development, networking, mentorship, and leadership opportunities including the annual Conference for Women in the Law and Rosalie Wahl Leadership Lecture, as well as the many additional opportunities available each year to participate in MWL sponsored events.

By embracing change and inclusion, the LeVander firm has grown and flourished for 90 years and confidently looks forward to another 90 years of continued success. Such resilience and confidence is undoubtedly tied to the Firm's demonstrated commitment to the ideals of equality and inclusion, ideals which have come to epitomize the new generation of LeVander, Gillen & Miller attorneys. ■

MWL Member Spotlight:

Sophia Vogt



Sophia Vogt

Sophia Vogt is an Assistant County Attorney in Hennepin County in the Community Prosecution Division. Previously Sophia worked as a law clerk for U.S. Senator Ron Wyden. Sophia is the co-chair of the MWL Legal Athletes Affinity Group.

1. Describe your professional background and your current employment position?

I've done a little bit of everything! Prior to and during law school at Santa Clara, I worked as an Assistant Tennis Professional at a country club in Los Gatos, California. While in law school, I focused on intellectual property and did externships and summer clerkships in privacy, trademark and copyright law. After graduation, I moved to Washington, D.C. and worked as a law clerk for Senators Harry Reid and Ron Wyden, where I advised both Senators on policy matters related to Internet privacy and the Fourth Amendment. My husband and I then went on the road for approximately one year while he was interviewing for residency positions across the United States, during which I left my job at Senate to build my own mobile business as a professional photographer, focusing specifically on commercial fashion and wedding photography. Since landing in Minnesota, I have followed my passion for public service and criminal law and am working as an Assistant Hennepin County Attorney at the Hennepin County Attorney's Office.

2. What do you enjoy most about your current position? What do you find most challenging?

I love my job! As a prosecutor at such a large and busy office, every day is different and presents a new challenge that I get to navigate. I'm constantly running around between my

desk and the courtroom, so the day never gets boring! My favorite part about my work is a tie between being in the courtroom, and building a case starting at the investigation stage.

3. When and why did you get involved with MWL?

I joined MWL when I first moved to Minnesota in July 2018 because I did not know a single person in the entire Midwest. I am from California and my husband is from Washington, D.C., so when we matched here for his medical residency, I knew I would have to put myself out there and meet others in the legal community to gain my footing in a new state.

4. What advice do you have for someone interested in getting involved with MWL? What do you think is the best way to get involved?

My advice would be to get involved in as many things as you can, and try to take on a leadership role if you have the time. When I moved here, I joined a few affinity groups as a way to meet others in a smaller setting. From there, I made some new friends and began a network in Minnesota!

5. How did you start up the MWL Legal Athletes group?

I competed on a full scholarship at a Division I university in San Diego and have several years of experience teaching tennis as a professional. While I did join a few MWL affinity groups, I still felt like I wanted some friends to work out with in an informal setting outside of happy hours and coffee shops, and was actually hoping to find some other tennis friends since I was new to Minneapolis. I ended up joining Lifetime Fitness to meet other workout friends, until I realized this would actually be a wonderful group to create within MWL and use as a tool to meet likeminded lawyers.

6. What are some activities MWL Legal Athletes is interested in doing this year?

We have already hosted a hot yoga class, a group running event, a group golf lesson, and are hoping to do a fun group cardio tennis class by the end of the year! We're always open to new ideas and suggestions, so if you have an activity in mind, please feel free to contact me directly!

7. How does MWL provide value and opportunities, both personal and professional?

MWL is a wonderful network of women from a diverse set of employment backgrounds who look for opportunities to promote and support each other professionally. There are always new events and activities happening and there are ample opportunities to get involved and build your professional network.

8. What is your favorite MWL event to attend and connect with fellow MWL Members?

I've really enjoyed the affinity group events because they are intimate, casual, and I always get to meet someone new!

9. What have been your best resources for your own professional development?

LinkedIn has been a lifesaver. In addition to networking through MWL when I first moved to Minneapolis, I used LinkedIn heavily to send out cold emails and set up informational interviews with attorneys so that I could get my name out there. I also joined the MSBA and attended many of their CLE events, where I met several new contacts.

10. What was your favorite part of Summer 2019?

Moving into the new home we just bought in Diamond Lake! ■

Remembering Irene Scott

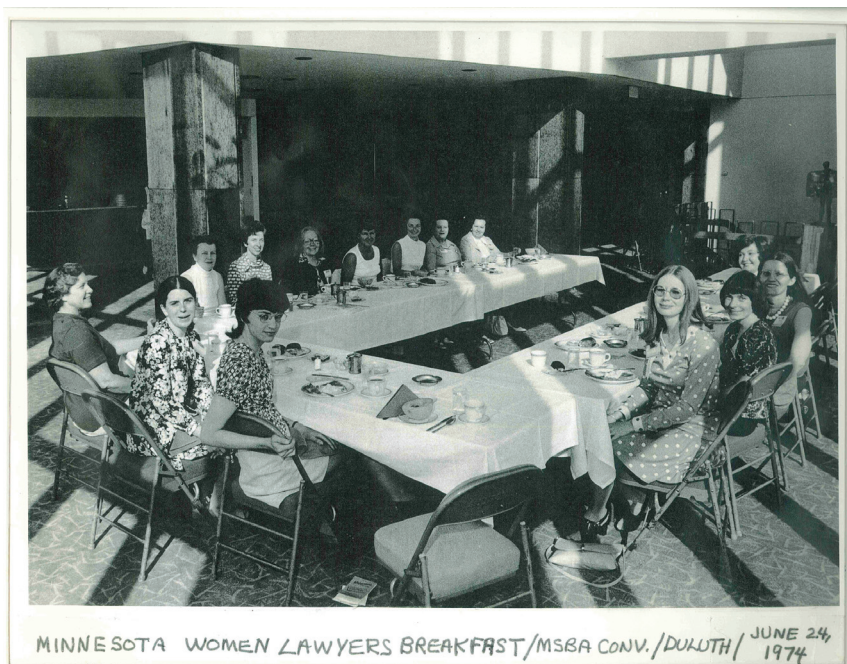
MWL's First President

On June 28, 2019, Irene Scott, a founding member of Minnesota Women Lawyers and the association's first president, passed away. The following tribute was written by Jill Weber at Stinson LLP. The Scott family graciously agreed to let MWL share it here.

Former Leonard, Street and Deinard partner Irene Scott, the first woman to become a partner at a major law firm in Minnesota in 1958, passed away on June 28, 2019. Irene practiced law from 1950 to 1996, joining the firm in 1952. She formally "retired" in 1975, but nonetheless maintained an active practice presence with the firm until 1996.

Pairing a trailblazing personality and an indomitable work ethic, Irene practiced in the areas of general corporate law, estate planning and probate, and trust administration. Irene was one of the original founders of Minnesota Women Lawyers (MWL). She served as MWL's first president in 1972-73 and worked with fellow members to secure ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment in Minnesota. MWL honored her in 1987 with the Myra Bradwell Award. Irene's other civic contributions included serving on the State Ethics Commission, the Board of Visitors for the University of Minnesota and the Board of Governors for the Minnesota State Bar Association.

Irene began her practice when women rarely appeared in the courtroom or the boardroom. In an interview that appeared in MWL's magazine, she reflected that when she graduated from law school in 1950, where she was one of only 8 women in her class, women weren't allowed in the lounge, and had to use the law librarian's bathroom. In that interview, she shared her hope for future women lawyers: "I hope that women lawyers look to the future with excitement and anticipation as they continue to forge new traditions and professional identities for themselves, while maintaining a dedication to professionalism and a commitment to making our communities better places in which to live." ■



Irene Scott is pictured along with MWL's other founding members at the Minnesota Women Lawyers Breakfast at the MSBA Convention, June 24, 1974 in Duluth.
Far Side of Table: Irene Scott, Mary Louise Klas, Judith Oakes, Sue Sedgwick, Corrine Lynch, Charlotte Farish and Mary Walbran
Left: Rosalie Wahl, Patricia Belois, (unknown),
Right: Nancy Olkon, Sue Halverson, Camilla Reiersgord and Cara Lee Neville

MWL's Upcoming Calendar of Events:

2019 Committee Fair and Fall Social

Date: Thursday, September 12, 2019
Time: 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Location: Stinson LLP
(50 South 6th Street, Minneapolis)

MWL Alternative Legal Careers Breakfast

Date: Tuesday, September 17, 2019
Time: 7:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.
Location: Wilde Roast Cafe & Spirits
(65 Main Street SE, Minneapolis)

In a Flash: A Lesson In Cybersecurity

Date: Wednesday, September 18, 2019
Time: 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Location: Windows on Minnesota
(50th Floor IDS Center, Minneapolis)

Celebrating the 30th Anniversary of the Report on Gender Fairness in the Courts

Date: Thursday, September 26, 2019
Time: 3:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Location: Minnesota Judicial Center, Room 230
(25 Rev Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
Blvd, St. Paul)

Solo and Small Firm Practitioner Group

Date: Friday, October 4, 2019
Time: 9:45 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.
Location: 8120 Penn Ave South, Blomington

MWL Book Club

Date: Tuesday, October 8, 2019
Time: 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Location: Salut Bar Americain, St. Paul

MWL's 25th Rosalie Wahl Leadership Lecture

Date: Wednesday, October 23, 2019
Time: 5:00 to 8:30 p.m.
Location: Prime Therapeutics
(2900 Ames Crossing Rd., Eagan)

SAVE THE DATE:

MWL Conference for Women in the Law

Date: Friday, April 24 2020
Location: Marriott City Center, Minneapolis

Additional seminars and events will be scheduled in the coming months. Visit www.mwlawyers.org for complete event details and registration.

The MWL Partner Leadership Council

In an effort to convene MWL's 2019 Partners in an exchange of ideas and best practices, Minnesota Women Lawyers has been pleased to convene its "MWL Partner Leadership Council."

All 2019 MWL Partners were invited to appoint an emerging leader from their organization to serve as an attorney representative to the 2019 MWL Partner Leadership Council. Through their participation, representatives collaborate to advance the success of women attorneys across the legal community, and also have the opportunity to network among a diverse group of legal community leaders.

The overarching goals of the MWL Partner Leadership Council are threefold:

- » To promote MWL's mission and strategic values by building collaborative and mutually beneficial relationships with its legal employer Partners;
- » To bring together legal community leaders in an exchange of ideas and best practices related to advancing women attorneys; and
- » To make specific recommendations to the MWL Board of Directors on current and potential programs and initiatives, particularly in light of the organization's mission and values, strategic plan, available resources and current trends in the legal profession.

2019 Partner Leadership Council Members:

Arthur Chapman Kettering Smetak & Pikala, P.A.
Shayne Hamann

Ballard Spahr
Jessica DuBois

Barnes & Thornburg LLP
Molly Sigler

Bassford Remele, P.A.
Cecilie M. Loidolt

Benchmark Reporting Agency
Leann Barrick

Best & Flanagan LLP
Katherine Barrett Wiik

Bowman and Brooke LLP
Jennifer Wichelman

Briggs and Morgan, P.A.
Lauren Pockl

Depo International
DeAnne Brooks

DLA Piper
Leigh Abrams Waterman

Dorsey & Whitney, LLP
JoLynn Markison

Faegre Baker Daniels LLP
Elizabeth Scheibel

Fish & Richardson P.C.
Deanna Reichel

Fox Rothschild
Kathryn Dehn

Fredrikson & Byron, P.A.
Emily Unger

Gray Plant Mooty
Amy Erickson

Greenberg Traurig LLP
Tiffany Blofield

Greene Espel PLLP
Kate Swenson

Gustafson Gluek PLLC
Brittany Resch

Halunen Law
Amy E. Boyle

Jones Day
Kristin Zinsmaster

LeVander, Gillen & Miller, P.A.
Cassie Wolfram

Liberty Diversified International
Ronda Bayer

MADEL PA
Cassie Merrick

Maslon LLP
Stephanie Laws

Meagher & Geer, P.L.L.P.
Kate Johnson

Moss & Barnett
Jana Aune Deach

Nilan Johnson Lewis
Leah Kippola-Friske

Ogletree Deakins
Jennifer Lenander

Paradigm / Veritext
Jan Ballman

Patterson Thuermer IP
Sarah Stensland

Prime Therapeutics
Kristina Cruz

Quinlivan & Hughes, P.A.
Jessie Sogge

Robert Half Legal
Sarah Paisley

Robins Kaplan LLP
Liz Burnett

Saul Ewing Arnstein & Lehr LLP
Erin Westbrook

Stinson LLP
Eleanor Wood

Stoel Rives LLP
Maggie Dalton

U.S. Bank National Association
Allira Bailey

Winthrop & Weinstine, P.A.
Quin Seiler

Xcel Energy
Jennifer Thulien Smith

Zelle LLP
Laura Bartlow

Thank You to MWL's 2019 Partners

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Dorsey & Whitney LLP
Faegre Baker Daniels LLP
Greenberg Traurig LLP
Gustafson Gluek PLLC
MADEL PA
Robins Kaplan LLP

Gold

Ballard Spahr LLP
Barnes & Thornburg LLP
Fredrikson & Byron, P.A.
Stinson LLP
Zelle LLP

Silver

Briggs and Morgan, P.A.
Fish & Richardson P.C.
Jones Day
Larkin Hoffman
Merchant & Gould P.C.
Moss & Barnett
Nilan Johnson Lewis PA
Saul Ewing Arnstein & Lehr
Stoel Rives LLP
Thomson Reuters

Bronze

Arthur Chapman Kettering Smetak & Pikala, P.A.
Bassford Remele
Benchmark Reporting Agency
Best & Flanagan LLP
Bowman and Brooke LLP
Depo International
Fox Rothschild LLP
Gray Plant Mooty
Greene Espel PLLP
Halunen Law
Jackson Lewis P.C.
LeVander, Gillen & Miller, P.A.
Liberty Diversified International
Maslon LLP
Meagher & Geer PLLP
Mueiting, Raasch & Gebhardt, P.A.
Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak & Stewart, P.C.
Paradigm / Veritext
Patterson Thuermer IP
Prime Therapeutics
Quinlivan & Hughes, P.A.
Robert Half Legal
Stoetoe & Johnson LLP
UnitedHealth Group
U.S. Bank National Association
Winthrop & Weinstine, P.A.
Xcel Energy

Save the Date: The 2020 MWL Conference for Women in the Law

MWL is pleased to announce The 2020 MWL Conference for Women in the Law, to be held on **Friday, April 24, 2020** at the Marriott City Center in downtown Minneapolis.

The goal of the MWL Conference is to collaborate across MWL's statewide community, provide programming of interest to our membership, and foster networking opportunities, all in the effort to advance MWL's mission. The Conference will also incorporate MWL's 48th Annual Meeting as the luncheon program, at which time MWL will present its Annual Awards.

This fall, MWL will again accept "Request for Proposals" allowing MWL members and the legal community to submit proposals for Conference break-out seminars. Complete details about the RFP process, as well as the MWL Conference itself, will be available in September 2019.

2019 MWL Conference Recap:



2019 MWL Conference Afternoon
Keynote Speaker Dawn Rosemond
(center) pictured with MWL Leadership



2019 MWL Conference Morning
Keynote Presenter Hilarie Bass



Panel Presentation "Legal Lessons: Advice to My Younger Self" Speakers
(Left to Right): Luz Maria Frias, Nicole James Gilchrist, Maria Mitchell,
Abigail Nesbitt, and Stacey Slaughter

Special thanks to our 2019 Conference Sponsors:

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MWL 100% Club Members - 2018-2019

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Bloch & Whitehouse, P.A.
Brekke, Clyborne & Ribich, LLC
Brown and Carlson, PA
Franz Hultgren Evenson
Gaskins Bennett Birrell Schupp LLP
Gerlach, Beaumier & Trogdon
Gustafson Gluek PLLC
Jackson Lewis P.C.
Johnson & Turner Attorneys at Law, P.A.
Larkin Hoffman
Larson • King, LLP
Law Office of Katherine L. MacKinnon
P.L.L.C.
LeVander, Gillen & Miller, P.A.
MADEL PA
Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak &
Stewart, P.C.
Patterson Thuente Pedersen, P.A.
Prime Therapeutics
Quinlivan & Hughes, P.A.
Reichert Wenner, P.A.
Sykora & Santini PLLP
Tuft, Lach, Jerabek & O'Connell, PLLC
Zelle LLP

MWL's 100% Club Members are legal employers where all female attorneys are current MWL Members. Employers must have at least two female attorneys to be eligible.

Join MWL as a 2019-2020 100% Club Member

Legal employers who are interested in being recognized as a 100% Club member must report their eligibility to MWL. If you would like a list of the MWL members at your place of employment to compare to your records, please contact MWL Membership Coordinator Hannah Zuercher. (hzuercher@mwlawyers.org.)



Members on the Move



Congratulations to MWL members who were recognized as 2019 First Chair Award Recipients by First Chair:

Dionne Blake
Target Corporation

Alicia Dessner
Prime Therapeutics

Sukanya Momsen
Best Buy



Jana Aune Deach has been elected to the Board of Directors at Moss & Barnett. Jana is a member of the firm's family law team. She is a nationally recognized family law practitioner who serves as a compassionate advocate for clients and their children. Jana provides counsel in all areas of family law. She also serves as chair of M&B Cares, the firm's community outreach and philanthropic committee.



Congratulations to MWL members who were recognized as 2019 Diversity & Inclusion Award Recipients by Minnesota Lawyer:

Ami ElShareif
Robins Kaplan LLP

Arleen Nand
Greenberg Traurig LLP

Summra Shariff
Twin Cities Diversity in Practice

Judge Wilhelmina M. Wright
District of Minnesota



MWL member **Veena Iyer** has been selected as the new Executive Director of the Immigrant Law Center Minnesota. Veena has worked at the Nilan Johnson Lewis since 2011, and was named shareholder in 2015. Veena is also a past president of the Minnesota Asian Pacific American Bar Association, is a member of the organization's Advisory Board and its Judicial Committee, and received the organization's Leadership Award. She has held numerous board roles with MWL and received the Service to MWL Award. She also serves on the board of directors at Portico Healthnet as vice chair and member of the Finance Committee.



Congratulations to MWL members who were recognized as 2019 Up & Coming Attorneys and Unsung Legal Heroes by Minnesota Lawyer:

Alicia Miller Buchel
Clifton Larson Allen

Alison J. Bure
Faegre Baker Daniels LLP

Rachel Kitze Collins
Lockridge Grindal Nauen

Angela Follett, Ph. D.
Fish & Richardson

Holley Horrell
Greene Espel PLLP

Katie LaGrange
Ballard Spahr LLP



MWL member **Shana Tomenes** has received the inaugural Diana Murphy Scholarship. Tomenes worked at three part-time jobs while majoring in psychology and minoring in legal studies as an undergraduate at Hamline University. Now, she volunteers for Street Law and the Washington County Community Circles program, where she helps build bridges among victims, offenders and community members. Tomenes also is the managing editor of the law journal. She clerked for the Hennepin County Public Defender's office and currently clerks on the Minnesota Supreme Court.

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NEARLY 10 YEARS. 29% OF PRACTICE
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BY WOMEN. 46% OF THE FIRM'S
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ON LAW360'S 2019 GLASS
CEILING REPORT FOR BEST LAW
FIRMS FOR FEMALE PARTNERS.

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Thanks to MWL Premier Members 2018-2019

Minnesota Women Lawyers extends sincere thanks to its 2018-2019 Premier Members. A strong Premier Member commitment has been vital to MWL's success over this past year.

Diamond

Felicia Boyd
Susan Gallagher
Teresa McClain
Arleen Nand
Susan C. Rhode
Jenny Robbins
Hon. Mary Vasaly

Sapphire

Patricia Beithon
Lisa Brabbit
Dixie Carroll
Justice Margaret Chutich
Dr. Angela Follett
Elizabeth Fors
Kathleen Lamb
Judith Langevin
Dr. Teresa Lavoie
Katie Lichty
Pamela Rochlin
Hon. Miriam Rykken
Breia Schleuss
Amy Taber

Visit our website to view a complete list of MWL's Premier Members.

Help Us Reach Our 10% Goal: Join MWL as a 2019-2020 Premier Member

Premier Membership allows you to streamline your annual support and enjoy exclusive benefits all year long! Our Premier Members also help make MWL more accessible to all members through their increased support.

This year, our goal is for 10% of MWL's membership to join or renew as a Premier Member. Each Premier Membership would not only be a big step towards this goal, but it would also provide such a strong message of support to the rest of the legal community. MWL offers its sincere thanks to those who have already renewed or joined as a premier member for the 2019-20 Fiscal Year.

MWL's FY19-20
"10% GOAL"



I invite you to help MWL reach its 10% Premier Membership goal.

MWL Premier Members demonstrate their commitment to MWL's mission with an increased dues amount. This support enhances MWL's ability to offer high-quality programs and networking, and allows MWL to offer low-cost memberships and event scholarships. Your Premier Member support is a big step towards our goal. Learn more, including exclusive benefit details at mwlawyers.org."

Debra Pexa, MWL Executive Director, second from left.

(Pictured with Jan Ballman, Jessie Sogge, Kristin Zinsmaster and Amy Taber.)

Help MWL Continue to Advance Our Mission by Renewing Your Membership

All MWL memberships expired on June 30, 2019. If you haven't already renewed for FY19-20, we invite you to do so today.

MWL brings together nearly 1,300 lawyers, judges, law students, legal employers and supporters who are dedicated to advancing the success of women in the legal profession and striving for a just society. MWL believes that bringing diverse individuals together allows us to collectively and more effectively develop ideas, respond to the needs of our membership, and address issues within our legal community. MWL welcomes all levels of involvement, and is dedicated to addressing the changing needs of women in the legal profession through initiatives that are guided by our mission and values.

All members up for renewal have been sent an email notice and mailing with instructions on how to renew. Please contact MWL Membership and Communications Coordinator Hannah Zuercher (hzuercher@mwlawyers.org) with any questions.

Visit www.mwlawyers.org/memberbenefits to find out more.

2019 MWL Committee Fair and Fall Social

Date: Thursday, September 12, 2019

Time: 5:00 - 6:30 P.M.

Location: Stinson LLP

(50 South 6th Street, Suite 2600, Minneapolis)

Find out how you can make the most of your membership and help advance MWL's mission by attending MWL's 2019 Committee Fair & Social! All members and prospective members are invited to attend. Guests will mix and mingle with MWL Leadership and learn more about new volunteer opportunities. And if your schedule doesn't allow more active involvement right now, we hope you'll still join us to socialize. We promise good company and good conversation!

*Special thanks to 2019
Committee Fair &
Fall Social Host:*

STINSON

Remember: Your MWL Involvement is Welcome at Anytime!

If you are not able to attend the MWL Committee Fair, but are interested in getting involved, please contact MWL Membership and Communications Coordinator Hannah Zuercher (612-338-3205; hzuercher@mwlawyers.org). MWL offers countless opportunities to gain leadership experience and expand your network, through active involvement on an MWL Committee, Affinity Group or taskforce. We are happy to add you to a Committee or Affinity Group contact list, connect you with group leadership, and provide details about upcoming meetings or gatherings.



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Make the Most of Your MWL Membership: Get Involved!

2019-2020 MWL Chapters

The Central Chapter includes MWL members working or living in the counties of Benton, Douglas, Kandiyohi, Meeker, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Pope, Sherburne, Stearns, Todd. The Chapter typically meets on the third Thursday of the month from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. at various venues in the St. Cloud area.

The Central Chapter officers will be announced shortly.

The St. Croix Valley Chapter includes MWL members working or living in Washington and Chisago Counties. The Chapter meets to discuss current legal issues, network, and socialize and hosts volunteer opportunities in the community. Upcoming activities will be announced shortly.

President: Angela Heart, Heart Law, LLC
Vice President: Vicki Hrubby, Jardine, Logan & O'Brien
Secretary: Anne Brown, Sjoberg & Tebelius, PA
Treasurer: Mackenzie Campbell, Doar Drill & Skow
Liaison to the MWL Board of Directors: Anne Brown, Sjoberg & Tebelius, PA
Secondary Liaison to the MWL Board of Directors: Lesa Koski, Attorney at Law

The South Central Chapter includes MWL members working or living in the counties of Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Steele, Waseca and Watonwan. The Chapter typically meets the second Thursday of each month from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Loose Moose in Mankato.

President: Kenzie Corrow, Farrish Johnson
Vice President: Amanda Heinrichs-Milburn, Judicial Law Clerk
Liaison to the MWL Board of Directors: KyLee Manthei, Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services

The Northeastern Chapter includes MWL members working or living in the counties of Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Lake, Pine and St. Louis. The Chapter typically meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month, 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Dubh Linn Restaurant in Duluth.

President: Amanda Mangan, Johnson, Killen & Seilor
Vice President: Heidi Frison, Law Office of Yvonne Michaud Novak
Secretary: Paige Orcutt, Judicial Law Clerk, Sixth Judicial District
Treasurer: Kay Biga, Spott Law Office
Liaison to the MWL Board of Directors: Kay Biga, Spott Law Office

You could be the king
but watch the queen conquer.

-Nicki Minaj, *Monster*

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Make the Most of Your MWL Membership: Get Involved!

2019-2020 MWL Affinity Groups

Alternative Legal Careers

The goals in forming an Alternative Legal Career Affinity Group are to 1) promote the many career options available to attorneys who choose not to practice but are still law school graduates; 2) provide professional development opportunities to the broad range of skills and experiences of the many alternative career attorneys in MWL; 3) create an opportunity to exchange ideas, perspectives, and career options with each other; and 4) validate alternative careers as viable, intentional, and important ways in which an attorney can use a law degree. Gatherings will be held on at least a quarterly basis, alternating between happy hour gatherings, informal gatherings, and programming.

Co-Chairs:
Ruth Isaacson, Trust Point Inc.
Tara Smith,
Thompson Terasek Lee-O'Halloran PLLC

Book Club

The MWL Book Club offers a casual and fun opportunity to meet other MWL members and discuss a book of common interest. Gatherings are held on the second Thursday of every month from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Salut Bar Americain in St. Paul. The group enjoys dinner together (pay on your own) and then spends an hour discussing the book selection for the month.

Co-Chairs:
Karen Bohaty, Attorney at Law
Amy Krupinski,
Collins, Buckley, Suntry & Hough PLLP

In-House Attorneys

Geared towards attorneys in an in-house setting, the goal of the MWL In-House Attorney Affinity Group is to provide an opportunity for its members to meet, support and network with one another, as well as to discuss issues of common interest. Gatherings will be held at least quarterly, and will feature focused discussions led by a speaker, and more casual opportunities to connect with one another.

Co-Chairs:
Poonam Kumar, DLA Piper LLP
Katie Lichty, Land O'Lakes, Inc.
Karen Opp, Korn Ferry

Knitting

The MWL Knitting Affinity Group seeks to foster the creative talents of MWL members by providing a venue for members to gather and engage in knitting or other creative endeavors. The group meets on the first Wednesday of every month at 7 p.m. at rotating locations throughout the Twin Cities and metro. All creative interests are welcome.

Chair:
Shannon Harmon,
IRS, Office of the Chief Counsel

Legal Athletes

The Legal Athletes Group is a fun and informal way to meet fellow MWL members while breaking a sweat! Our goal is to create a supportive space for active women and promote a balanced, healthy lifestyle. Our events will range from group yoga, spin, zumba, walking, running, rollerblading, golf, racquet sports, and pretty much any other activity where we can get our heart rates up and enjoy some fitness and fun! We anticipate that formal group gatherings will be held quarterly (and may be subject to a small fee, depending on our planned activity and head count), with the option for more informal subgroup meetings.

Co-Chairs:
Caren Seenauth, Best Buy
Sophia Vogt, Hennepin County Attorney's Office

Legal Wine Lovers

The MWL Legal Wine Lovers consists of members who enjoy tasting and learning more about wine and wine-related topics. Our goals are to increase our wine knowledge, provide educational opportunities by inviting guest speakers who are industry experts or leaders, meeting new members using a common interest as the draw, networking, and FUN!

Co-Chairs:
Jan Ballman, Paradigm / Veritext
Nikki Keirnes,
Bernstein Private Wealth Management

Master Lawyers

Geared towards MWL's more experienced members (Admitted to the bar at least 10+ years or 35+ years old), the goal of the MWL Master Lawyers Affinity Group is to provide an opportunity for more senior members to meet, support and network with one another, and discuss experiences shared by women who have attained leadership positions within the legal profession. Meetings are held quarterly.

Co-Chairs:
Heidi Fessler, Innova Law Group, PLLC
Barbara Klas, Caspoint
Julia Velasquez,
First American Title Insurance Company

Professional Parents

The MWL Professional Parents Affinity Group hosts monthly luncheons and events, which provide a relaxed environment for MWL's working parents to meet with one another, network, and share their experiences, challenges and successes, as it relates to their families and their professional careers. The group typically meets on the 2nd Thursday of every month at noon at the MWL office.

Chair:
Alona Rindal, US Bank National Association

Public Sector

The goal of the MWL Public Sector Affinity Group is to create opportunities for MWL members who work for governmental entities to build their networks and learn about other state and federal career opportunities. Networking not only creates a sense of community but may also help members understand how different governmental agencies function, facilitating their own jobs and building their understanding of how governmental bodies are interrelated. The MWL Public Sector Affinity Group plans to meet every other month, usually in St. Paul, but sometimes in Minneapolis. Most events will be social but with occasional topic-focused meetings if interest exists.

Co-Chairs:
Katherine Kelly,
Minnesota Attorney General's Office
Shana Tomenes,
Hennepin County Public Defender

RISE: New Lawyers

RISE: New Lawyers Affinity Group is aimed at being an authentic and vibrant group of MWL members who support and connect with one another in their first through fifth years beyond law school. Goals include: 1) Promoting further satisfaction for women in the practice of law; 2) providing individual professional development opportunities; 3) sharing of resources and the exchange of ideas; 4) emphasizing networking, connection, and the power of community and relationship building; and 5) encourage a space for new lawyers to connect with each other and have fun while doing it. Gatherings will be held on at least a quarterly basis.

Co-Chairs:
Maria Brekke, Minnesota Supreme Court
Molly Hough, Bassford Remele

Solo & Small Firm

Join other MWL members who are solo and small firm practitioners to discuss issues of common interest. Meetings are held on the first Friday of each month (second Friday on holiday weekends) from 9:45 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. in Bloomington.

Co-Chairs:
Mary Szondy, Attorney at Law
Theresa Johnson, Theresa Johnson Law

2019-2020 MWL Committees

Awards & Recognition

The purpose of the Awards and Recognition Committee is to honor, recognize and celebrate individuals, entities and legal employers who 1) represent the highest ideals of the legal profession; 2) enhance the status, influence and effectiveness of women lawyers; and/or 3) advance MWL's mission. To that end, the Committee administers MWL's Myra Bradwell and Leadership Awards, which are presented annually at MWL's Annual Meeting. The Committee also identifies and submits nominations to external organizations and entities on behalf of MWL, which further the Committee's purpose. Meetings: TBA

Co-Chairs:

Ji Hae Kim, Target
Tina Syring, Cozen O'Connor
Jenny Robbins, MADEL PA

Chapter Coordination

The Chapter Coordination Committee provides direct support to current MWL Chapters, as well as supports the development of new chapters throughout Minnesota. The Chapter Coordination Committee also identifies how MWL can best support women attorneys outside of the metro-area, regardless of proximity to a current MWL Chapter. Recommendations are made to the MWL Board for subsequent implementation. Meetings: TBA

Co-Chairs:

Kate Bruce, Optum
Chapter Representatives: To be announced

Community Action & Advocacy

The Community Action & Advocacy Committee facilitates greater community service and public policy programming and activities as defined by MWL's mission and values, and approved by the Board. Current focus areas include: 1) violence against women; 2) pay equity; 3) access to justice; and 4) girl empowerment. The Committee typically meets on the first Thursday of every month from 7:30 am to 8:30 am at The Coffee Shop in North-east Minneapolis.

Co-Chairs:

Kelsey Kelley, Anoka County Attorney's Office
Nicolet Lyon, Lyon Law Office
Mary Szondy, Attorney at Law

Development

The Development Committee assumes primary responsibility for establishing key stakeholder relationships and subsequently raising the funds to meet established revenue goals. This effort will be driven by the development and implementation of MWL's annual fundraising plan. The Development Committee meets on the first Thursday of the month from 12 pm to 1 pm at the MWL office or via teleconference.

Co-Chairs:

Susan Gallagher, Gallagher Law Office, L.L.C.
Kristin Haugen,
KC Haugen Law / Rock Solid Consultants.
Libby Stennes, Greenberg Traurig LLP

Equity

The MWL Equity Committee is tasked with general oversight for MWL's projects and initiatives related to the systemic advancement and success of women attorneys. Current Equity Committee activities include: coordination and oversight of the MWL Media Project, activities related to attaining nonprofit and corporate board positions, the judicial pipeline initiative, the MWL Gender Data Project, general oversight for and promotion of The MWL Compendium, the Pay Equity Project, and other related initiatives in support of MWL's Strategic Plan. The full Equity Committee meets quarterly on the 3rd Thursday of the month at 8:30 am at the MWL office or via teleconference. Sub-Committee's meet periodically between the quarterly meetings.

Co-Chairs:

Katie Bennett, Gaskins Bennet & Birrell LLP
Amy Boyle, Halunen Law
A. Elizabeth Burnett, Robins Kaplan LLP
Kelly Clark, Heinz Law
Angela Keise,
Minnesota Attorney General's Office
Adine Momoh, Stinson LLP
Elizabeth Patton, Fox Rothschild LLP
Trisha Volpe, Barnes and Thornburg LLP

Programming

The Programming Committee is charged with general oversight for all of MWL's programs and CLE's, ensuring MWL's work is coordinated and meeting established annual strategic goals. To that end, the Committee will also assist Staff and the Board in the development and maintenance of MWL's master calendar of events. The Committee typically meets the 1st Tuesday of the month at 12 pm via teleconference.

Co-Chairs:

Kelly Lelo, Larson • King L.L.P.
Karen Opp, Korn Ferry
Alona Rindal, US Bank National Association

Programming: Annual Conference

The Annual Conference Subcommittee provides general oversight and coordination for the annual MWL Conference, to be held in the spring of each year. The Committee typically meets the 1st Friday of the month from 12 pm to 1 pm via teleconference or at the MWL office.

Co-Chairs:

Lisa Lodin Peralta, Peralta Appellate Law PLLP
Amy Schmidt, Ramsey County Attorney's Office
Lynn Walters, Blackstock Walters LLC

Programming: CLE

The CLE Subcommittee coordinates professional development and leadership events that support women attorneys in: 1) addressing issues of bias and inequity within the profession; 2) developing core competencies; 3) building skill and expertise within specific legal/practice areas; 4) developing leadership skills; 5) attaining leadership positions outside of the legal community; 6) developing and supporting mentoring relationships. The Committee meets on the 2nd Friday of each month at noon in the MWL offices or via teleconference.

Co-Chairs:

Emerald Gratz, Minnesota Supreme Court
Andrea Hoversten, Geraghty O'Loughlin & Kenney

Programming: Networking

The Networking Subcommittee coordinates MWL's stand-alone networking events. Additionally, the Committee provides support and oversight for networking events held in conjunction with other MWL events. The Committee also works to create a welcoming and accessible environment across all MWL activities, to foster opportunities for members to develop meaningful connections and relationships with one another. Meetings are typically held on the second Thursday of each month at noon at the MWL office or via teleconference.

Co-Chairs:

Dionne Blake, Target
Kristen Haugen,
KC Haugen Law/ Rock Solid Consultants
Nicole Truso, Faegre Baker Daniels LLP

Publications

The Publications Committee is responsible for producing MWL's quarterly publication *With Equal Right*, ensuring its content and format supports MWL's strategic objectives and goals. Meetings are held on a quarterly basis at the MWL office and via teleconference.

Co-Chairs:

Ellen Ahrens, MADEL PA
Laura Arneson, Mueting, Raasch & Gebhardt
Jennifer Wichelman, Bowman and Brooke

The Official Journal of Minnesota Women Lawyers

Minnesota Women Lawyers, Inc.
600 Nicollet Mall, Suite 390B
Minneapolis, MN 55402

Renew Your Membership Today!

Current MWL members are invited to renew their Minnesota Women Lawyers membership!

All memberships expired on June 30, 2019. Together, MWL members focus on advancing the success of women lawyers and striving for a just society. Take full advantage of membership benefits such as networking, leadership & mentoring opportunities, social events, community action initiatives and more. As MWL looks forward to the coming year and beyond, a continued commitment from individual members will be key to our ongoing success.

RENEW ONLINE at www.mwlayers.org.

Are you a proud member of Minnesota Women Lawyers?
Help MWL expand its network and invite a colleague to join us!



MWL Values:

Equality: Promoting equality and diversity within the legal profession and community.

Leadership: Developing women lawyers into leaders.

Community: Engaging and celebrating a diverse community of women lawyers.