

The Official Journal of
Minnesota Women Lawyers



MWL is Pleased
to Welcome
2018-2019
President
Shannon Harmon

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In This Issue:
**Parental
Leave**

From the President



Shannon Harmon

Focusing on Family

In late April, I finally got one of those dreaded calls. My phone rang right as I was leaving for work one morning, and my heart sank when I saw it was my mom. She didn't normally call me at 7:45 a.m., so I had a bad feeling. She said my dad had had chest pains in the middle of the night and was at the hospital. Doctors later confirmed it was a heart attack and, after they found six blockages in his heart, he went in for open heart surgery a few days later. My mom was also scheduled for a surgery the next week, and my brother was on a trip in Russia and Uzbekistan, so I flew to Cincinnati to help. At that time, I chose to focus on my family.

Shortly after Dad's surgery, a news story got me thinking about another aspect of family leave. The French Open was about to begin, and Serena Williams was set to play her first major tennis tournament since her 14-month maternity leave. Although ranked No. 1 by the Women's Tennis Association ("WTA") at the beginning of her maternity leave, Serena's ranking had fallen to 453rd during her absence from the sport. Because French Open officials decided to base tournament seedings on the WTA ranking, Williams was not seeded at the French Open. This meant she could face higher seeded players

Choosing Your Focus

By Shannon Harmon

2018-2019 MWL President

earlier in the tournament¹. It seems her decision to focus on her family and health had deterred her professional position, if only briefly.

The issue of family leave is at the heart of MWL's mission to "advance women in the profession." Advancement requires identifying the barriers—like insufficient family leave—that prevent us from advancing, plan how to remove them or—when necessary—push through or jump over them, and then take action. But when there seem to be so many different obstacles, including several that are hard to identify, and when some of those obstacles are the result of historically and socially ingrained attitudes and mentalities, it is daunting to know where to begin and how to make a meaningful difference. Even for MWL.

Focusing MWL's Resources

When your attention is in high-demand, it helps to choose your focus. The opportunity for sufficient family leave allows you to choose to focus on your family while work and other priorities become secondary for a finite period of time. All other priorities don't necessarily go away, but the amount of attention and resources you devote to them is guided by the primary focus on your family obligations. MWL will soon be choosing its focus.

At its March 22, 2018 meeting, the MWL Board of Directors adopted its 2018-2020 Strategic Plan. One of the strategic goals charges MWL to: "Focus. Maximize MWL's mission impact by focusing our resources." Strategy 1 of this goal directs MWL to "Set a deliberate and purposeful goal with specific deliverables to guide

1. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/early-lead/wp/2018/05/22/french-open-declines-to-give-serena-williams-a-seeding-after-maternity-leave/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.2f03fd530f45

MWL's activities and resources." In an effort to move forward with this strategy, I have asked a Board of Directors Working Group to consider and make a recommendation regarding what this goal should be. As part of this work, the group will review MWL's existing projects and initiatives to determine how MWL should proceed with each project, including whether one of these projects should be expanded as the deliberate goal.

Throughout its history, MWL has launched numerous worthy programs, projects, and initiatives. If you take a look at MWL's website today, you will see many active projects and initiatives—such as the Student to Attorney Mentoring Program, the Gender Data Project, and Media Resource Project—and there are more in the works! MWL is fortunate to have so many dedicated volunteers who spend their own free time running these projects and a wonderful staff (including our newest staff member, Katie Baker!) who work very hard to keep it all going. In selecting its deliberate goal, MWL will choose its focus for a finite period of time. Of course, this doesn't mean all other MWL projects will cease, but the deliberate goal will guide how much of MWL's valuable staff and volunteer resources the organization will devote to them.

Things went relatively well with my parents' surgeries, and I was able to return to Minnesota only a week later. My dad is struggling with all the lifestyle changes the doctors recommend after a heart event, but he is multiple months smoke-free after almost 50 years of a three-pack-a-day habit. He is not doing everything perfectly and he may smoke again, but at least for now, it seems his scare has put his focus in a place it's never been before—not smoking. ■

About Shannon

Shannon Harmon is an attorney with the IRS Office of Chief Counsel's Small Business/Self-Employed Division. Prior to joining Chief Counsel, Shannon served for more than nine years as an Assistant Attorney General with the Minnesota Attorney General's Office, including five years in the Charities Division and four years in the Tax Litigation Division. She is a graduate of New York University and the University of Minnesota Law School and a native of Cincinnati, Ohio.

Since joining the MWL Board as a Director in 2011, Shannon has also served in the role of Secretary, Treasurer and President-Elect. In addition to serving on the MWL Board and many other leadership roles across MWL, Shannon serves as the Chair of the Knitting Affinity Group. Shannon was also instrumental in the formation of the MWL Foundation, first co-leading an exploratory task force in 2012, and then serving as MWL Foundation President for 3 years. She currently serves as an MWL Foundation Board Director.

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Minnesota Laws Regarding Family and Medical Leave



Stephanie D. Sarantopoulos

management, leave and accommodation issues, employee discipline and termination. She also offers training on a variety of topics, the most recent of which include effective investigations, accommodation and employee discipline and documentation.

By Stephanie D. Sarantopoulos

Stephanie D. Sarantopoulos represents employers in litigation of labor and employment-related disputes in state and federal courts and before administrative agencies. Aside from litigation, Stephanie counsels employers of all sizes in all aspects of employment law, including discrimination, harassment, retaliation, whistleblowing, defamation, and compliance matters. Working predominately with retail clients, Stephanie also regularly advises employers on day-to-day concerns including performance

A patchwork of federal and Minnesota state law governs the leave to which pregnant and new parent employees are entitled and their treatment when they return to work. On the federal side, the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), Title VII, and the Pregnancy Discrimination Act govern. In Minnesota, these rights are supplemented by the Minnesota Parental Leave Act (MPLA), the Minnesota Human Rights Act (MHRA), and the Women’s Economic Security Act (WESA).

Most simply, the FMLA entitles eligible employees to 12 weeks of leave during a 12-month period for qualifying events, including the birth of a child¹. This leave need not be paid². Under the MPLA an employer must also provide 12 weeks of unpaid leave, within 12 months of the birth or adoption of a child. These basic requirement, however, does not begin cover the full scope of an employer’s obligations or employees’ rights to leave.

Not Only New Mothers

Traditional legal protections of traditional “maternity leave” have been substantially increased over the last 20 years. First, a father is similarly entitled to leave. Second, since the Supreme Court’s decision in Obergefell established the federal right of same sex couples to marry, leave may not be limited to opposite sex couples. Further, the MPLA, as supplemented further by the WESA, expanded Minnesota’s law to protect “family status” which extends the right to leave to include prospective parents of adoptive children.

Not Merely About Time Away From Work

An employee’s right to take leave is also more robust than merely being able to return to work. An employee must be allowed to return to a position with similar responsibilities, pay, promotional opportunities, and benefits. Both federal and state law also require that employers maintain health benefits of employees taking leave³. However, Minnesota only requires that an employer make its health insurance coverage available to the employee; an employee need not pay for such coverage⁴.

Interference and Retaliation

The law protects not only an employee’s right to leave and accommodations, but also an employee’s right to request and take such leave. Accordingly, even if an employee is allowed to take leave, a claim may arise if an employer takes adverse actions against the employee as a result of the employee asking for or taking such leave.

Understand Which Law Applies

While federal and Minnesota law are similar in many respects, there are some important substantive differences, as well as their applicability to employers and employees. An employer is covered by the FMLA if it has more than 50 employees. An employee at a covered employer qualifies for FMLA protection if he or she has been employed for at least 12 months and for at least 1,250 hours during the 12 months immediately preceding the request for leave⁵. Under Minnesota law, employers are covered by the MPLA if they have more than 21 employees at one location in the state⁶. An employee qualifies if he or she has worked for the employer, at least half time, for 12 months. WESA removed the requirement that the 12 month period be consecutive.

Management Awareness

Employers should ensure that managers are trained to understand applicable laws regarding parental and pregnancy leave, including the risks of claims for interference, retaliation and discrimination. While it may seem apparent, employers may not base hiring, placement, compensation, promotion, scheduling, or other employment decisions on an employers’ pregnancy, or potentially even state desire to have children. Managers should also be trained to avoid negative stereotyping regarding employee’s family status and related obligations.

Employers Should Engage with Employees and Articulate Legitimate Business Reasons For Any Change in Treatment

While the protections are robust, employers are entitled to make decisions regarding their employees based on legitimate business reasons, unrelated to an employee’s pregnancy or parental status. Accordingly, employers should engage with employees on their requests and articulate and document the business reasons for changes in a potentially covered employee’s employment. If an employee clearly understands the reasons for a change in their employment, disputes can be avoided at the outset.

Requests and communications regarding Leave and Accommodations with employees should be well documented.

Because claims related to parental leave can turn on whether an employee can establish that an employer’s purported reason for the treatment at issue is pretext, it is important that communications regarding leave and pregnancy accommodations are well documented. This includes documentation of the interactive process to address accommodations or requests for leave, as well as reasons for refusals to provide leave or changes in an employee’s position or responsibilities after a request for leave is made, or an employee returns from leave.

Accommodations after Childbirth or Adoption

Minnesota law and federal regulations have also expanded what is considered to be a pregnancy related issue to include lactation. Guidance by the EEOC issued in 2015 established “lactation as a pregnancy related medical condition” making less favorable treatment potentially discriminatory. And under WESA employers must provide reasonable accommodations for health conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth, including reasonable unpaid break time for pumping in an appropriate setting⁷.

(Article Continues on Page 8)

Re-Entering the Legal Profession After Caring for Kids



Tien Cai

By Tien Cai

Tien Cai is an Associate at Dorsey & Whitney LLP who specializes in construction litigation and advises clients at every phase of construction from contract review, to business decisions, to preparation for litigation during performance, to dispositive motions and settlement negotiations for early resolution of litigation, to recovery at trial or arbitration.

There are always compromises when balancing work and family. After a six month unpaid maternity leave in 2003, I returned to work part time as an associate attorney in construction litigation. One month later, I resigned because my husband’s company relocated us a couple of times; and for numerous reasons, I did not apply for work. By March 2018, my husband was no longer with his former company, and we decided to switch roles. He could spend more time with our teenagers and be our main care provider and, I could re-enter the legal profession.

The Job Hunt

I decided to look for a construction litigation position. My job search took about two months, and included the following steps:

•In mid-January, I emailed my former boss in California for a reference. He called me within nine minutes of my email. This reminded me of how important it is to create and maintain strong work relationships.

•Next, I reached out to a former partner of my old Minnesota firm who has gone solo. He spent several hours coaching me and pointed out that some firms have salary and billable hours information posted on their websites. This led me to articles by minnlawyer.com and blogs on many firms’ salaries. He also emailed me a contact list of twenty-seven attorneys at twenty firms who primarily practice in construction litigation.

•I am a master gardener and have done 300-400 hours of volunteer work per season. So, I also reached out to the City of Savage’s Superintendent of Parks and Recreation who got me in touch with his contacts at the Department of Natural Resources.

•Also, lawyers I met through friends at our kids’ school gave me valuable information about the Attorney General’s office.

•I studied a great deal about how to interview with firms and guidelines for cover letters and resumes. These articles suggested a targeted approach to firms. Other articles stressed the importance of volunteer experience and to state your absence from the work force and the reason in your cover letter. Online articles prepared me for the questions firms might ask and suggested good questions to ask. They also advised to be a good listener during the interviews but sell your experience to senior partners. In addition, they advised treating the call-back interview like the first interview. You should ask the same questions over and over with different interviewers because it is helpful to get different insight in response to the same questions.

•I reached out to a Minnesota mediator with whom I had several cases, and he helped me narrow my firm contact list further.

•I studied all my past cases. Before I left my old firms in Minnesota and California, the firms permitted me to save all files created by me to a disk as my work product. I studied these files for my own self-development. I also kept a file of emails, letters, and note cards whenever someone paid me a compliment for my work on a case. I knew my work product inside and out.

The Interviews

After using all of this information and sending my resume to selected firms, I was thrilled to get some interviews. The interview process was all about compatibility. I got better at interviewing the more interviews I did. With the firms that indicated they would like to hire me, the interviews were very fun and interesting. We talked about music and volunteer work. Other firms asked how I would feel working with younger associates and partners to which I replied “Great!” Other firms expressed concern about my ability to learn electronic discovery. I assured them that I am very capable of learning the technology. I had created an advocacy video to help save the orchestra program in Burnsville by learning the software in one week. The school IT/advanced math teacher and I were the only ones who knew how to use that software.

Volunteering was the most helpful way to keep me relevant, and I discussed that during the interviews. As always, you get more out of volunteering than you put in. For example, I obtained insurance coverage for defense of a class action and obtained a nominal settlement. I tried an easement dispute and obtained a complete defense verdict. I advised on hospital and employment contracts and zoning and planning. I did a non-profit tax filing. All of these cases were outside my construction litigation specialty and done without support staff or Westlaw. My interviewers were also interested in my work in cooking for 75 homeless women each month, my overnight volunteering at a homeless shelter, mentorship activities for families in need, and my gardening expertise.

I had interviews with firms who knew my construction litigation experience and work ethic. So, the greatest opportunity was in my field of specialty. I reached out to a colleague from my former Minnesota firm who was now chair of Dorsey & Whitney LLP’s construction litigation group. While we had not kept in touch, I emailed her anyway. Dorsey was the most professional in the hiring process. Dorsey made me an offer within three hours of completing the first set of interviews and offered to cancel all remaining scheduled interviews at my option. I was very impressed with the firm, and I accepted the offer.

Lessons Learned

In sum, a diverse network is very valuable for re-entry. People are so kind and generous; they will help you. You should email or call colleagues even if you have not spoken to them in fifteen years. If people do not respond, do not assume the worst. People are busy. Just move on, there are plenty of people who will help you.

Thankfully, the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) can eliminate some obstacles to re-entering the work place after having children. The FMLA applies to public state, federal, local, and private employers with fifty employees or more for at least twenty workweeks during either this year or the previous year. These employers are required to permit employees up to three months of unpaid leave each year with no threat of job loss. Employers are also required to maintain health benefits for eligible workers just as if they were working. Also, the employee must work for the employer for twelve months, and 1,250 hours or more during those twelve months before taking leave. An employee may take medical leave for the following reasons and more: (1) serious medical condition, (2) an immediate family member with a serious medical condition, (3) the birth or placement and/or subsequent care of the employee’s child, adopted or foster care child, (4) deployment to active duty of the employee’s spouse, child or parent.

Dorsey and many other firms and organizations go further than the FMLA and provide 14-16 weeks of paid maternity leave , up to six additional months of unpaid maternity leave, and eight weeks of paternity leave, as well as back up childcare; you do not need to take the leave all at once. As our world changes, men and women can be free to take on non-stereotypical roles when there is a lower threat of job loss from raising a family. ■

Happy Lawyers Make Happy Clients



Left to Right: Kimberly M. Hanlon, Sommer Spector Angstman

By Sommer Spector Angstman

Sommer Spector Angstman is an attorney with Lucère Legal, LLC. Lucère Legal, LLC is a Minneapolis based law firm serving small business owners, family owned businesses, and cabin owners with business matters, estate planning, probate administration, and litigation services.

“What is it that we want out of our own life and out of the practice of law?”

“More time with our kids and family.”

“The ability to pursue a non-law business.”

“More time to travel.”

“Flexible workspace, hours, and pay.”

“A job that will fit into our life and not take over.”

The traditional law firm model will not deliver those things, and solo practice brings with it more flexibility but additional and unpaid work. Imagine: if a firm combined the resources of a sizeable firm with the flexibility of solo practice- the above goals could be achieved. This was the thought process my law partner Kimberly and I had when we sat down to create our firm. We started with the “why” and built up to the “who,” and the “what.” Lucère Legal, LLC was at the end of the equation.

The Why?

Successful business owners can tell you the “why” of their business and a law firm should be no different. Our love of the law is like a nice, stable marriage; sometimes you want to dive right in and enjoy its company, and sometimes you need a short, peaceful break. Our profession has a high burnout rate, and elevated rates of alcoholism and depression. Perhaps it’s the personalities that gravitate to the law, but perhaps it’s the long hours worked over the course of years. When you work long hours over the course of many years, you wake up to realize that not only have your joints weakened but so too have your support systems and social ties. There is a point in one’s life and career when one must prioritize their career goals or their personal goals. Mine was when I was working as a state public defender carrying a caseload of 150 felonies. As I was spending yet another night at the jail past 8PM, walking down the long, white-washed halls that smell like day old mop water, I said to myself, “There’s got to be a better way to practice law.” Lawyers in large law firms have those moments, as do government lawyers, corporate counsel and even solo practitioners. And your choice at that moment is almost a zero-sum game: stay in a conventional practice, and still spend more hours at the office than you do at home or with your family. Traditionally the practice of law has not been seen as leaving much room for other competing priorities.

But when Kimberly and I sat down we said that our firm must promote a life outside of the law. We believe that a lawyer with a satisfying life on all fronts, one who makes time for life and law, makes a better lawyer, is calm and fulfilled, and better serves our clients as happiness is contagious. All too often a lawyer taking leave to have a child or taking years off to dedicate time to family needs is seen as a liability. We see those people as an asset. A lawyer who values their family and their social ties is going to better communicate with our clients and understand their needs. Let’s not forget that raising and guiding the next generation is a commitment of significant societal importance, and the attorney who has chosen to do that has made a salient and positive impact on the world. Even if the attorney needs a part-time practice to balance an entrepreneurial pursuit, their desire to start a needed business adds value to society and to our clients. If the lawyer just desires to travel for half of the year, that too is a value added to our firm because when that lawyer steps back through the doors of our office, they will be ready and refreshed to listen to our clients and their goals. For all of those reasons, the “why” is central to our firm’s mission and structure.

The Who?

When sketching a picture of our perfect law firm we pictured an environment where the attorneys can pick up or put down as much or as little of the law as they want. They will pick and choose which cases they wish to work on, when and from where to work and if they wish to network to bring cases in. Because we anticipate that the firm would use a commission-based pay, we want a good mixture of lawyers who would enjoy the substantive law and self-starters who enjoy building networks. It’s not an absolute requirement to network for the firm, but we want lawyers to be passionate about the subject matter or the organization in which they choose to participate. We value lawyers with a collaborative and supportive nature, who are diverse in background, life-long learners and who seek to build a community with their colleagues. Internal competition and workplace politics can often be stifling and destructive in a small office, so that is not encouraged within our culture. Naturally, we thought, people who want to work at home, or want less time in the office and a lower caseload would more likely want a collaborative working environment. Not to mention- that’s the kind of workplace we want for ourselves.

The What?

So how does one make a law firm that can scale to every individual attorney’s work and life needs? Stepping away from the old vanguard of the brick and mortar law firm is one way. We office in executive suites to meet with clients and each other for meetings, but otherwise encourage work from home. Lean law firm production is another way. We changed the traditional offering of an employer to employee of a fixed salary to commission based pay that rewards both the work done on the case and the network that sourced the case. Our firm offers flat fees whenever possible to our clients and as such we can dedicate a percentage of the flat fee to each portion of the case worked. A technology infused practice streamlines remote work with cloud based work flow, calendars, on-line collaboration through video conferencing and shared file storage. If you have an internet connection, you can work on a case, even if you happen to be sitting on a boat or enjoying the cabin at the time. We have created the operational processes necessary to build this system of independent lawyers who work together under one virtual roof.

The title of this article is not just our mantra but it’s how we live our life and run our law firm. Our vision for Lucère is to offer to lawyers who may otherwise be marginalized for prioritizing family or dissatisfied with the traditional practice model, the four corners of a law firm: the marketing, the finance, the operation and human resources, within which they can practice on their own terms. Our goal is to create a cadre of attorneys who practice in complimentary but diverse areas who can share in the firm’s four corners, comradery and clientele. We are always looking to grow, so if you feel that you would be a good fit with our “why,” please reach out to us and see where it takes you. ■

Negotiating Family Leave

By Christine B. Courtney

Christine B. Courtney is the Victim Services Coordinator at the Minnesota Elder Justice Center. As Victim Services Coordinator, Chris works with primary and secondary victims of elder abuse on various victim services programs, including legal representation, economic advocacy, domestic violence support, safety planning, and vulnerable adult systems navigation. To unwind at the end of the day, Chris and her spouse, Ryan Courtney, spend their time parenting their three children: Robinson (6), Seraphine (4), and Arthur (9 months).

My first child was born during the exam week of my final semester of law school. Two weeks later, I began my bar review course. Two and a half months later, I sat for the bar exam. I began my first full-time job as an attorney six months after I took the bar exam.

My second child was born while I worked in private practice at a firm with about 15 attorneys. I took four weeks “off”, checking voicemail and email every day. For the next eight weeks, I worked two days a week.

My third child was born while I worked at a small nonprofit. I took two months off (no voicemail or email this time), and then spent two months working two days a week.

Without question, negotiating my maternity leave in private practice was the most difficult experience of the three. I had been with the firm for less than a year when my baby was born. I was given no cues or suggestions for practically planning my maternity leave. I was expected to, and did, propose my own plan for the leave. Without any framework or input to base my leave proposal on, I asked for a leave that required constant checking in and I did not feel secure enough to request more “unplugged” time with my new child. While I would like to believe that this firm was an outlier, I fear that this is an all-too-common experience.

Parental leave is a complicated experience to navigate for any woman, and particularly for women in male-dominated fields. In many law firms, there is no parental leave policy at all, and short-term disability is not offered. To say the least, this makes family planning extremely challenging.

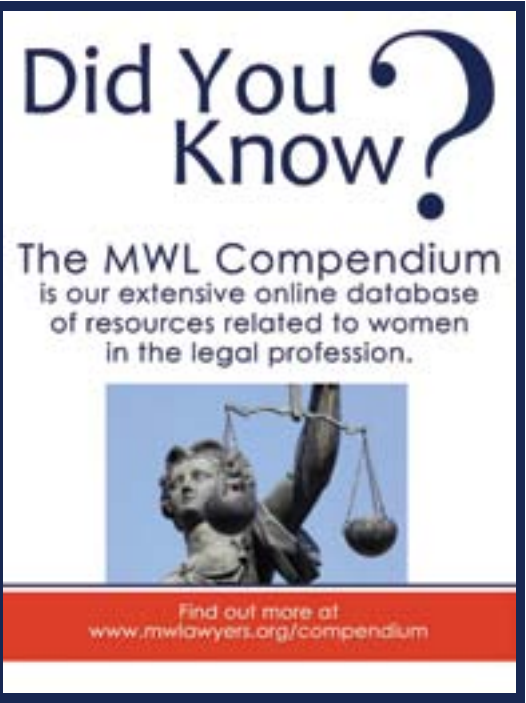
Choosing how to structure your own parental leave is a highly personal decision based on many factors: the nature of your practice and business, the ability of your colleagues to manage your work in your absence, your personal finances, your family support systems, and (quite obviously to you, although perhaps not to your employers) the nature of your actual birthing experience, the trauma to your own body, and the health of your newborn child. There is another aspect that can significantly influence how you structure your leave: your employer’s explicit policy on parental leave, its caregiver benefits, and the ability to sign up for short-term disability benefits. The absence of those three things also sends its own (sometimes unintentional) message about how your employer feels about parental leave.

My spouse is an attorney, and a shareholder in a firm with less than 20 attorneys. After the birth of our second child, he and his fellow shareholders noticed that a couple talented female attorneys left and had children shortly thereafter. His firm had no stated parental leave beyond allowing for legally required time off. They offered no short-term disability benefits.

After some serious, targeted discussions among the (largely male) shareholders, my husband’s firm now has a parental leave policy and benefit for eligible employees. The standards for eligibility and scope of benefit are available to employees and potential employees prior to pregnancy. They also offer short-term disability benefits. In the year and a half since that change was made, his firm has had more pregnancies than in the prior decade. Only one of those babies (ours) was born to a male attorney.

Without doubt, this is not earth-shattering information for anyone reading this article. Explicit parental leave policies matter to young employees, and they have a direct relationship with retention. I encourage any shareholders or partners reading this article to remember that they are in a position to dramatically impact their employees’ lives, and I hope that they consider how their firm’s policies work in practice. Steps taken by an employer to acknowledge and accommodate the personal milestone of parenthood may also create or strengthen a culture where employees feel valued. While many strongly dislike the tradition of the “office baby shower”, it has one significant benefit: it symbolically demonstrates that the organization supports the employee in this significant personal landmark.

Unfortunately, as young female professionals, we cannot always choose our employers based on their caregiver leave (nor are we encouraged to ask about this particular benefit during the interview process). An obvious problem of finishing law school in your mid-twenties is that it can be difficult to gain social and political clout in the office while still in your child-bearing years. However, in that situation, I would remind my fellow attorneys and aspiring parents: consider the leave that works best for you and best for your career, and then ask for it. You do not need to fit your family within a six-week box if you feel that a different arrangement would work better for your family, your work, and your needs. When preparing for my last leave, I considered my organization’s explicit caregiver leave policy, the nature of my work in the organization, and my own needs—and I asked for the leave that I wanted. Without question, my third parental leave was my most joyful and easiest, and best tailored to my needs and my family’s needs. I could not have gotten it if I had not asked for it. ■



Save the Date: The 2018 MWL Rosalie Wahl Leadership Lecture Monday, November 5, 2018



Elaine Weiss

Minnesota Women Lawyers (MWL) is pleased to announce the 2018 MWL Rosalie Wahl Leadership Lecture to be held on the evening of **Monday, November 5th, 2018** at the Marriott City Center in downtown Minneapolis. The Wahl Lecture will also feature a silent auction to benefit MWL Foundation’s Law Student Scholarship Fund. The general reception and Silent Auction will begin at 5pm. Dinner will begin at 6pm, and the program will begin at approximately 6:30pm. Complete registration details are available at www.mwlawyers.org.

MWL is honored to welcome Elaine Weiss as our 2018 Wahl Lecture keynote speaker. Elaine is an award-winning journalist and writer. Her most recent book, ***The Woman’s Hour: The Great Fight to Win the Vote*** details the nail-biting climax of one of the greatest political battles in American history; the fight to ratify the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, granting women the right to vote. The Woman’s Hour is also set to be adapted into a television series, produced by Steven Spielberg and Hillary Clinton.

Given the 2018 Wahl Lecture will be held the evening before the 2018 mid-term elections, Elaine’s timely remarks will prove particularly relevant as Americans across the nation prepare to vote the following day.

Elaine’s Wahl Lecture presentation is titled: ***The Women Who Dared***. From Elaine: *“The 19th Amendment placed women’s right to vote into the U.S. Constitution—but that simple legal acknowledgement that American women were entitled to full citizenship did not occur naturally: it required three generations of activist women, fighting in more than 900 campaigns, over more than seven decades. Women were not “given” the vote—they fought for it—using all*

the legal—and even illegal—means at their disposal; they faced mobs, condemnation, arrest, and imprisonment. The suffragists’ legal and publicity strategies would become a model for civil rights campaigns to come; they have valuable lessons to teach us now, as we struggle to protect voting rights for all.”

More About Elaine Weiss

Elaine Weiss is an award-winning journalist and writer. Her magazine feature writing has been recognized with prizes from the Society of Professional Journalists, and her by-line has appeared in The Atlantic, Harper’s, New York Times, Boston Globe, Philadelphia Inquirer, as well as reports and documentaries for National Public Radio and Voice of America. She has been a frequent correspondent for the Christian Science Monitor.

Her long-form writing garnered a Pushcart Prize “Editor’s Choice” award, and she is a proud MacDowell Colony Fellow. Her first book, Fruits of Victory: The Woman’s Land Army in the Great War was excerpted in Smithsonian Magazine online and featured on C-Span and public radio stations nationwide. Elaine holds a graduate degree from the Medill School of Journalism of Northwestern University. She has worked as a Washington correspondent, congressional aide and speechwriter, magazine editor, and university journalism instructor.

Registration & Sponsorship Opportunities

2018 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. (hzuercher@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 series feature women whose decisions and abilities inspire the leaders of tomorrow, just as Justice Wahl inspired so many of us.

Continued from Page 4: Minnesota Laws Regarding Family and Medical Leave

It is important for employees to familiarize themselves with their rights both under the law and pursuant to their employer’s policies to confirm their understanding of their rights and entitlements as they plan for desired or necessary leave time for pregnancy, childbirth and adoption.

Likewise, it is important for employer’s to carefully consider their handling of pregnancy and parental leave requests and related issues not only for legal compliance but also with attention to the significant economic impact such leave can have for employees and employers alike and the often implicated sensitive issues of gender stereotypes, family structure, same-sex relationships that can come into play.

The bottom line is that taking time away from work pursuant to pregnancy and parental leave is part of a bigger life event for employees who are becoming parents or growing their families and part of a bigger concern for employers wanting to support and retain their workforce. Supporting both goals ensures both parties thrive. ■

Endnotes:

1. 29 U.S.C. § 2612(a)(1)(A).
2. 29 U.S.C. § 2612(c).
3. 29 U.S.C. § 2614(c)(1); Minn. Stat. s. 181.940(2)-(3).
4. Minn. Stat. s. 181.940(4).
5. 29 U.S.C. § 2611(2)
6. Minn. Stat. s. 181.940(2)-(3).
7. Minn. Stat. § 181.9414(1)

Remembering Judge Diana Murphy

By Lisa Montpetit Brabbit



Judge Diana Murphy

Lisa Montpetit Brabbit is the Assistant Dean for External Relations and Programs at the University of St. Thomas School of Law. She earned her B.A. cum laude at Saint Mary’s College in Notre Dame, Indiana. She went on to earn her J.D. at William Mitchell College of Law where she served on the Law Review. Before joining St. Thomas, she specialized in personal injury, products liability and wrongful death. Lisa Brabbit is a Past President of Minnesota Women Lawyers, and currently serves on the MWL Advisory Board.

Following Judge Diana Murphy’s passing, Justice Margaret Chutich probed, “What do you think made her tick?” From 2006-2010, I had the privilege of chronicling Judge Murphy’s oral history so I had a sense of how her upbringing shaped the larger-than-life legal pioneer that the wider world came to know and love. Much has been written about Judge Murphy’s professional life, but less attention has been paid to the formative influence of her early years.

Born Diana Esther Kuske, she could read the newspaper before she ever attended school. Her father was a military physician with a strong work ethic, and her mother was a community leader and registered nurse. Diana was their oldest child, and she blended her father’s Germanic approach to life and desire for order with her mother’s personal warmth. According to her father, Diana was destined for the medical profession.

She lived in five different cities before the age of six – she spent enough time in South Carolina to acquire just the hint of a southern accent. Within her first three months of formal education at a Seventh Day Adventist School, Diana was skipped ahead to the second grade. In third grade, she and her friends would role play life events to come, who they would be, what they would be doing, and who would marry John Garfield, the heartthrob actor. In 1942, Diana was the newcomer at St. Luke’s grade school on Grand Avenue in St. Paul. Her father was willing to send her to private

Catholic school, at least until his predictable depression-era struggles made that impossible. (She attended Central High School in St. Paul.) At St. Luke’s, Monsignor Cullinan publically praised her for her academic abilities, a boost of confidence she carried forward for decades. She spent many hours in the church library, reading about the Saints and moving further into hagiography. She was deeply curious about church history and Catholic teaching. Her time in the St. Luke’s library brought into focus the aspirational model of a good, loving and kind person: other-centered.

In the years before rheumatoid arthritis ruled her every physical move, her bike was her ticket to social activity and adventure. She would make her way with friends to Como Park and the zoo. She would try her skills at golf and tennis. She even developed a passion for baseball, tuning into games on the radio for hours on end. Her mother took her to her first game; her father was far too busy with work. One way for Diana to spend time with her father was to accompany him to the hospital or to tag along on home visits. She did this even though she despised the smell of the hospital.

Her father was not the only professional in the family. Aunt Rose, Aunt Esther and Uncle Lawrence were lawyers, quite an accomplishment given the era and the fact that her grandparents could not even read or write. Her grandparents made a living as farmers, although her grandmother had difficulty tending to it – she suffered from severe rheumatoid arthritis, just as her granddaughter would. After working as a lawyer for some time, Aunt Rose eventually ran for a judicial seat (unsuccessfully). Aunt Esther defended claims against the United States and was quite accomplished. Her financial success allowed her to offer financial support to Diana’s father, which may explain why his eldest daughter bore Esther as a middle name. Aunt Esther understood the value of education, and in her own unique way planted seeds with Diana. She promised her \$100 if she ever went on to earn membership in Phi Beta Kappa. Diana made sure that Aunt Ester kept this promise, winning the honor as a student at the University of Minnesota.

In college, Diana applied to SPAN (Student Project for Amity among Nations) and told her father she’d pursue nursing if he let her go to Germany with Minnesota’s first study abroad program. He agreed, and the program changed her life. While in Germany, she fell in love with history and German culture. Her research focused on student housing projects in German universities. She lived in Berlin and soaked up every opportunity to learn from her growing circle of German peers, colleagues and friends. And when she returned, she had one of the most difficult conversations with her father; she would not be pursuing a nursing degree, she would be studying history.

Her passion for history brought her back to Germany after graduating magna cum laude. As a Fulbright Scholar in 1954, she studied at Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz. She focused on the German occupation of the Rhineland shortly before WWII. Very few women participated in the program. One of her faculty mentors, Father Lortz, reminded her that she was in the minority, referring to her as Kleines Frauleinchen (little times three) when he called on her in class. Diana moved beyond the reference, purchased his multivolume history of the church, and asked him to sign it. He made it clear to her that his choice of words were not generic, and wrote “Much more is possible than most people realize.” For Kleines Frauleinchen, those words launched her further into her desire to make the most of her gifts.

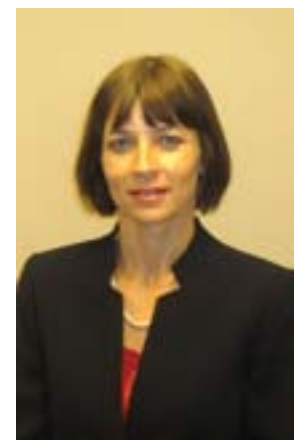
She returned to the University of Minnesota and continued to work on her PhD. She finished her coursework, fine-tuned her thesis topic (the early monastic movement and how it was organized), and was preparing to take her preliminary exams. She stayed focused on the plan until fellow teaching assistant, Joe Murphy, asked her if she wanted to accompany him to the Minnesota Institute of Art to see an exhibit on Minnesota architecture. She loved architecture – how could she say no? The exhibit was interesting, and Joe Murphy was captivating. They were engaged in the spring of 1958, married in July 1958, and following a five-week road trip honeymoon to Mexico, Michael Murphy was born in June 1959.

Her rheumatoid arthritis flared in significant ways after their second son, John, was born in 1962. She could not lift her arms above her head, she hurt all over, and she was home with two small children. She could not open a charge account in her own name, she would often muse that men were making a living simply by talking to each other, and she observed that many women went from being economically subservient to their fathers to their husbands. The confidence that educators, mentors and family members invested in her was not lost, though, and she had a growing ambition to contribute to the common good through public service. It was time for impact.

The group that had the greatest impact on her early days as a community leader was the Minneapolis League of Women Voters. Diana was president of the League when the country was celebrating 50 years of women’s suffrage. She was moved and inspired by the women who played a role in the right to vote; she was a student of the 1913 Women Suffrage Procession, the fearless leaders who marched through Washington D.C., and she noted how that march would shape the way women demanded equality in the future.

(Article Continues on Page 11)

MWL Member Spotlight: Alona Rindal



Alona Rindal

Alona received an MBA in Marketing from the University of St. Thomas in 2000 and held various positions in the banking industry, including Business Banking Officer for M&I, Bank Officer and Financial Consultant for Wells Fargo, and Marketing Channel Manager for U.S. Bancorp's First American Funds. Alona graduated from William Mitchell College of Law in 2008 and spent two and a half years at Anastasi & Associates, where she managed the firm's real estate foreclosure practice and handled a variety of other general banking matters for her financial institution clients. Currently, Alona leads a team of attorneys who provide comprehensive legal and regulatory support to all U.S. Bank's Consumer Default Management divisions, including Real Estate Foreclosures, Loan and Credit Card Collections, Loss Mitigation, Bankruptcy and Customer Complaints. In addition, she advised various business lines on Credit Bureau Management issues.

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

I received an MBA in Marketing from the University of St. Thomas in 2000 and held various positions in the banking industry, including Business Banking Officer for M&I, Bank Officer and Financial Consultant for Wells Fargo, and Marketing Channel Manager for U.S. Bancorp's First American Funds. I graduated from William Mitchell College of Law in 2008 and spent two and a half years at Anastasi & Associates, where I managed the firm's real estate

foreclosure practice and handled a variety of other general banking matters for her financial institution clients. I joined U.S. Bank Law Division in 2011 and, in my current role, lead a team of attorneys who provide comprehensive legal and regulatory support to all U.S. Bank's Consumer Default Management divisions, including Real Estate Foreclosures, Loan and Credit Card Collections, Loss Mitigation, Bankruptcy and Customer Complaints. In addition, I advise various business lines on Credit Bureau Management issues.

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

I enjoy coaching and mentoring my team of very talented lawyers. I had an opportunity to build my team over the last 5 years and I am proud of our accomplishments and growth. Out of a team of 9, 8 are strong accomplished women attorneys. The most challenging part is keeping each member of my team challenged and valued as they grow in their careers.

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

I got involved with MWL when I was a 1L at William Mitchell. I didn't know many attorneys and wanted to establish connections within the Twin Cities legal community and learn more about various careers in legal field. My first MWL mentor was Trudy Halla at Briggs & Morgan who became my role model! Hearing about her personal and professional journey inspired me to get actively involved in MWL.

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 is: 1) explore your options for MWL committee/affinity group involvement by reaching out to MWL staff, Board members, and committee/affinity group Chairs, and 2) each year make a commitment to actively participate in one or two committees/affinity groups.

5. How did you get involved in MWL's professional parents group?

I was working for a law firm in Stillwater when I had my 2 children. When I joined U.S. Bank and came back downtown I was looking to connect with professional parents juggling responsibilities of parenting & work. As well as attending to their own personal growth & professional development needs. Before I knew it, I was a co-chair of the Professional Parents Affinity Group.

6. What are some topics you would like to see the professional parent's group discuss in the next year?

How to teach our children grit & resilience; how to make every moment count – no matter how frustrated & tired you are; how to find time for yourself without feeling guilty! I would also like for members of the group to bring topics and ideas for discussion – to make sure we are addressing what they want to hear about.

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

I have met so many interesting and influential women attorneys through MWL – especially when I started joining committees and, eventually, the Board of Directors! I also believe that my increasing involvement in the leadership of MWL helped me develop the confidence to be an advocate for myself (both personally and professionally) and other women in the Law Division at U.S. Bank.

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

I love the annual Women in the Law Leadership Conference! Every year I am amazed at the great programming, as well as extensive networking opportunities at this MWL signature event.

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

I have been learning how to be a great leader from professional women around me since very early in my career. Prior to becoming a manager at U.S. Bank, I was constantly seeking leadership opportunities: whether it was joining a Board of a non-profit organization or volunteering to organize an employee team building event. You might think that your boss and other influential people around you are not noticing your initiative, but if you are doing this consistently (and continuing to draw their attention), eventually it all pays off... It certainly did for me!

10. What are you looking forward to most this summer?

Like every summer, I am looking forward to care-free weekends at my in-laws' pool with my 7-year-old son and 8-year-old daughter. I am also grateful for our family friends who invited us to spend several days at their lake home this summer! ■

Continued from Page 9: Remembering Judge Diana Murphy

The march was led by a human rights lawyer, some of the first women federal judges were suffragists. As president of the League, she was not about maintaining the status quo. One of the first items of business was to change the way the League referred to women. Mrs. Joseph E. Murphy would now be Mrs. Diana Murphy, and she made the change by fiat.

Diana's leadership skills began to coalesce around civil rights. She researched and studied human rights issues in North Minneapolis. She met with African American and Native American residents to address issues related to education, housing, transportation, and employment. She authored a study for the League, "Minneapolis Works for Equal Opportunity" and began speaking on the human rights issues, drafting legislation, lobbying and engaging community leaders. She served on countless committees and commissions, focusing on discrimination and bias in Minnesota communities. She specifically sought out women's groups and developed a reputation as a go-to for subject matter expertise with a get-it-done approach. Something else happened in these volunteer roles. She observed first-hand the benefits a law degree offered: advanced written and oral communication skills, a deeper understanding of the administration of justice and public policy, and the opportunity to be a voice for the voiceless. Greater impact – it would be her motivation for law school.

Was she too old for law school at the age of 37? At this point in her life, one lesson had crystallized: don't be afraid to take on difficult tasks or learn new things. And so it would be with law school too. Confidence was an important ingredient in that life lesson; the people she admired, her mentors and role models, had confidence. She would go forward, proactively undertaking difficult tasks, committed to life-long learning with great confidence. In the process, the same rules applied: understand the goals, break the needed work into manageable parts, and get people involved. This seemingly simple formula worked for Judge Murphy even in the most difficult and challenging of times and situations.

So what made Diana Murphy tick? It wasn't a myopic focus on the law as an intellectual puzzle or technique, and it wasn't a self-seeking desire for fame as a legal pioneer. It was some combination that stemmed from the careful modeling of her parents, the willingness of other trusted adults to invest in her development, a compassion for the marginalized, and a relentless curiosity about the world and appreciation for its limitless beauty. Those who knew her later in life know that she had a huge variety of personal interests and hobbies – Russian art, German history, Native American culture, film history, travel, architecture, red wine, the list goes on. These were not add-ons to her life that helped her pass the time; these were hallmarks of her development into the person we knew. She recognized the richness of our shared life, and that recognition called her to a career in law, working to empower meaningful participation in this wide and wonderful world. She made it a better place. ■



Pictured Left to Right: Judge Diana Murphy and Lisa Montpetit Brabbit

MWL's Upcoming Calendar of Events:

Committee Fair and Summer Social
Date: Wednesday, August 22, 2018
Time: 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Location: Stinson Leonard Street LLP
(50 South 6th Street, Ste. 2600, Minneapolis)

Knitting Affinity Group
Date: Wednesday, September 5, 2018
Time: 7:00 p.m. - 8:15 a.m.
Location: TBD

Solo and Small Firm Practitioner Group
Date: Friday, September 7, 2017
Time: 9:45 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.
Location: 8120 Penn Ave South, Bloomington

MWL Book Club
Date: Tuesday, September 11, 2018
Time: 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Location: Salut Bar Americain
(917 Grand Ave, St. Paul)

A Celebration of Women On Minnesota's Highest Court
Date: Monday, September 17, 2018
Time: 3:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Location: Minnesota Judicial Center
(25 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Room 230 St. Paul)

Rosalie Wahl Leadership Lecture
Date: Monday, November 5, 2018
Time: 5:00 to 8:30 p.m.
Location: Minneapolis Marriott
(30 South 7th Street, Minneapolis)

SAVE THE DATE:
MWL Conference for Women in the Law
Date: Friday, April 26, 2019
Location: Hyatt Regency Hotel, Minneapolis

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



2017 Committee Fair and Summer Social

The MWL Partner Leadership Council

In an effort to convene MWL’s 2018 Partners in an exchange of ideas and best practices, Minnesota Women Lawyers has been pleased to convene its “MWL Partner Leadership Council.”

All 2018 MWL Partners were invited to appoint an emerging leader from their organization to serve as an attorney representative to the 2018 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.

2018 Partner Leadership Council Members:

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

Ballard Spahr
Sarah Pruett

Barnes & Thornburg LLP
Autumn Gear

Bassford Remele, P.A.
Cecilie M. Loidolt

Bowman and Brooke LLP
Jennifer Wichelman

Briggs and Morgan, P.A.
Lauren Pockl

Chestnut Cambronne PA
Jennifer Crancer

Depo International
DeAnne Brooks

DLA Piper
Leigh Abrams Waterman

Dorsey & Whitney, LLP
JoLynn Markison

Faegre Baker Daniels LLP
Emily Chow

Fox Rothschild
Heidi Fisher

Fredrikson & Byron, P.A.
Emily Unger

Gray Plant Mooty
Amy Erickson

Greene Espel PLLP
Erin Sindberg Porter

Gustafson Gluek PLLC
Brittany Resch

Halunen Law
Amy E. Boyle

Jones Day
Kristin Zinsmaster

Larkin Hoffman
Emily Spallino

LeVander, Gillen & Miller, P.A.
Bridget Nason

MADEL PA
Cassie Merrick

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

Merchant & Gould P.C.
Rachel Zimmerman Scobie

Moss & Barnett
Jana Aune Deach

Nilan Johnson Lewis
Lori Johnson

Ogletree Deakins
Stephanie Willing

Paradigm Reporting & Captioning
Jan Ballman

Patterson Thuente IP
Amy Salmela

Prime Therapeutics
Kristina Cruz

Quinlivan & Hughes, P.A.
Jessie Sogge

Robert Half Legal
Courtney Sekevitch Brod

Robins Kaplan LLP
Liz Burnett

Steptoe & Johnson LLP
Libretta Stennes

Stinson Leonard Street
Jennifer V. Ives

U.S. Bank National Association
Katrina Coss

UnitedHealth Group
Jennifer Harper

Winthrop & Weinstine, P.A.
Holly Stocker

Xcel Energy
Jennifer Thulien Smith

Zelle LLP
Laura Bartlow

Thank You to MWL’s 2018 Partners

Platinum

DLA Piper LLP
Dorsey & Whitney LLP
Faegre Baker Daniels LLP
Gustafson Gluek PLLC
MADEL PA
Robins Kaplan LLP

Gold

Ballard Spahr LLP
Fredrikson & Byron, P.A.
Stinson Leonard Street LLP

Silver

Barnes & Thornburg LLP
Briggs and Morgan, P.A.
Fish & Richardson P.C.
Gray Plant Mooty
Jones Day
Larkin Hoffman
Merchant & Gould P.C.
Moss & Barnett
Nilan Johnson Lewis PA
Stoel Rives LLP
Thomson Reuters
UnitedHealth Group
Zelle LLP

Bronze

Arthur Chapman Kettering Smetak & Pikala, P.A.
Bassford Remele
Benchmark Reporting Agency
Bowman and Brooke LLP
Chestnut Cambronne
Depo International
Felhaber Larson
Fox Rothschild LLP
Greene Espel PLLP
Halunen Law
Jackson Lewis P.C.
LeVander, Gillen & Miller, P.A.
Maslon LLP
Meagher & Geer PLLP
Muetting, Raasch & Gebhardt, P.A.
Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak & Stewart, P.C.
Paradigm Reporting & Captioning
Patterson Thuente IP
Prime Therapeutics
Quinlivan & Hughes, P.A.
Robert Half Legal
Steptoe & Johnson LLP
U.S. Bank National Association
Winthrop & Weinstine, P.A.
Xcel Energy

Save the Date: The 2019 MWL Conference for Women in the Law

MWL is pleased to announce The 2019 MWL Conference for Women in the Law, to be held on **Friday, April 26, 2019** at the Hyatt Regency 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 47th 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 the coming months.

2018 MWL Conference Highlights:



2018 MWL Conference
Keynote Speaker Michele Coleman Mayes
(center) pictured with MWL Leadership



2017-18 MWL President Kendra
Brodin welcomes attendees to the
2018 Conference



Conference attendees at a breakout session

Special thanks to our 2018 Conference Sponsors:



MWL 100% Club Members - 2017-2018

Barna, Guzy & Steffen, Ltd.
Barnes & Thornburg LLP
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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

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 2018-2019 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 member **Hon. Cara Lee Neville** on receiving the 2018 MSBA Lifetime Achievement Award. The MSBA Lifetime Achievement Award is presented to an experienced member of the State Bar who has continually displayed commitment and contributions to the Bar, the legal profession, and/or the public throughout their career.



Avisen Legal, P.A. welcomes **Lisa Holter Ankel** as the newest member of its team of seasoned business law attorneys. Holter was a shareholder at Fredrikson & Byron prior to joining Avisen, where she spent over 20 years. In her practice, Holter acts as general counsel to her clients, advising business owners, management, investors and corporate boards on start-up matters, M&A transactions, raising money, shareholder agreements, buy-outs and a variety of joint venture and other commercial transactions.



Congratulations to MWL members who were recognized as 2018 Diversity & Inclusion Award Recipients by Minnesota Lawyer:

Hon. Pamela Alexander
State of Minnesota, Fourth Judicial District

Caryn A. Boisen
Larson King LLP

Sybil Dunlop
Greene Espel PLLP

Veena Iyer
Nilan Johnson Lewis PA

Tara C. Norgard
Carlson Caspers

Gloria Stamps-Smith
Assistant Hennepin County Attorney

Robin Wolpert
Sapientia Law Group



Adine Momoh has been appointed as the 2018-2019 President of the Hennepin County Bar Association. Adine is a Partner and trial attorney at Stinson Leonard Street LLP. Adine will become the 100th President of the Hennepin County Bar Association during its 100th Anniversary, being the first black woman and youngest attorney to serve in this position. Adine also serves as a Co-Chair of the MWL Equity Committee.



Arleen Nand, Partner at DLA Piper LLP has received the 2018 Virginia S. Mueller Outstanding Member Award in recognition of her exemplary work and contributions to the National Association of Women Lawyers. MWL thanks Arleen for her dedication to the success of women attorneys both here in Minnesota and Nationally.



Congratulations to MWL members who were recognized as 2018 Up & Coming Attorneys by Minnesota Lawyer:

Amy Conway
Stinson Leonard Street LLP

Ami ElShareif
Robins Kaplan LLP

Martha Engel
Winthrop & Weinstine, P.A.

Erica Holzer
Maslon LLP

Alexandra J. Olson
Carlson Caspers

Katherine M. Swenson
Green Espel PLLP

Kodi Verhalen
Briggs and Morgan, P.A.



MWL Member **Margaux Soeffker** has started her own private practice. Margaux is a family law attorney with over nine years of experience in family law practice including divorce, custody, child support, post-decree actions, adoption and child protection matters. In addition to her experience as a practicing attorney, Margaux previously worked as a law clerk for Judges Susan Burke, Toddrick Barnette, and Joseph Klein in Hennepin County District Court while they were on criminal rotations.

Help MWL Continue to Advance Our Mission By Renewing your Membership

All MWL memberships expired on June 30, 2018. 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 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.



2018 MWL Committee Fair and Summer Social

Date: Wednesday, August 22, 2019

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

Location: Stinson Leonard Street 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 2018 Committee Fair & Summer 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.

*Special thanks to 2018
MWL Committee Fair &
Summer Social Host:*



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). We are happy to add you to a Committee or Affinity Group contact list, connect you with group leadership, and/or provide details about upcoming meetings or gatherings.

Thanks to MWL Premier Members 2017-18

Minnesota Women Lawyers extends sincere thanks to its 2017-2018 Premier Members. A strong Premier Member commitment has been vital to MWL's success over this past year.

Diamond
Felicia Boyd
Susan Gallagher
Arleen Nand
Bridget Nason
Susan C. Rhode
Hon. Mary Vasaly

Sapphire
Patricia Beithon
Suzanne Born
Lisa Brabbit
Kathleen Lamb
Judith Langevin
Teresa Fariss McClain
Pamela Rochlin
Sandra Smalley-Fleming

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

Help Us Reach Our 10% Goal: Join MWL as a 2018-2019 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 2018-19 Fiscal Year.

A full list of benefits are available at www.mwlawyers.org/premiermembership

Resolution and Position Statement Regarding Family Separations at U.S. Borders



Statement from MWL 2018-19 President Shannon Harmon: “Minnesota Women Lawyers joins the Minnesota State Bar Association in its resolution on this important issue. MWL’s mission includes striving for a just society, and the separation of children from their parents at the border is inconsistent with a just society. MWL encourages its members to consider how they can help on this issue, including offering pro bono legal assistance and other volunteer support.”

Resolution and Position Statement Regarding Family Separations at U.S. Borders Adopted by Minnesota Women Lawyers on July 5, 2018

BE IT RESOLVED, that Minnesota Women Lawyers and the Minnesota State Bar Association join in concerns raised by the American Bar Association, the American Immigration Lawyers Association, and various Minnesota affinity bar associations regarding recent federal immigration policies resulting in the inhumane and unjust separation of minor children from their parents at the U.S. - Mexico border;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Minnesota Women Lawyers and the Minnesota State Bar Association adopt the attached position statement urging federal legislation to ensure that (i) the policy and practice of separating minor children from their parents, absent child endangerment concerns with procedural protections, cease and not be reinstated, and (ii) children who have already been separated from their families have a safe and expedient procedure for being reunited with their parents; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the Speaker and Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives, the President and Minority Leader of the United States Senate, members of Minnesota’s Congressional delegation, the Speaker and Minority Leader of the Minnesota House of Representatives, the Majority Leader and Minority Leader of the Minnesota Senate, the Governor of Minnesota, and the tribal governments of Minnesota.

Statement on Family Separations at U.S. Borders

The United States is a nation of diverse people where immigration has been a significant factor in our shared history and development. The United States is a place where people can find economic opportunity and a better life, escape persecution in their home countries, and fulfill their hopes for a brighter future based on freedom and democratic ideals. Our country is energized and enriched by the cultural diversity of its immigrants and their contributions to our society.

Immigration falls under the control of our federal government. On May 7, 2018, the Attorney General of the United States adopted a zero-tolerance prosecution policy, which mandates the prosecution for illegal entry of everyone apprehended between ports of entry, including asylum seekers. It is reported that implementation of this zero-tolerance prosecution policy caused a spike in family separations at the U.S. - Mexico border, resulting in over 2,000 children being separated from their parents since October 2017. Despite the recent Executive Order on June 20, 2018 and the federal government’s subsequent stated plan to preserve family units and end this policy of separating minor children from their parents, there is no plan in place to quickly reunite currently-detained children with their parents, some of whom have been separated for months. The American Psychological Association warns, and common sense dictates, that separating children from their parents causes serious harm to children already suffering trauma from fleeing their countries of origin.

Minnesota Women Lawyers and the Minnesota State Bar Association believe in the inherent dignity and humane treatment of all peoples, especially children, regardless of their immigration status. Minnesota Women Lawyers and the Minnesota State Bar Association support the various interests in and fair application of our country’s immigration policy, whether it relates to the pathway to citizenship and full membership in our society with its associated rights and duties, effective immigration enforcement, family unity, secure borders, or efficient and fair immigration processing.

Minnesota Women Lawyers and the Minnesota State Bar Association support immigration reform that keeps families together, upholds our national values, promotes economic growth, and maintains our security while respecting our cherished constitutional rights and values of due process, civil and human rights, accountability, and proportionality. Given the current state of affairs related to the zero-tolerance prosecution policy being enforced at our U.S. - Mexico border, the MSBA calls on lawmakers to take swift action in passing legislation to ensure that (i) the policy and practice of separating minor children from their parents, absent child endangerment concerns with procedural protections, cease and not be reinstated, and (ii) children who have already been separated from their families have a safe and expedient procedure for being reunited with their parents.

Minnesota Women Lawyers is an association of nearly 1,300 attorneys, judges, law students, legal employers, and supporters who are dedicated to advancing the success of women attorneys and striving for a just society.

Make the Most of Your MWL Membership: Get Involved!

2018-2019 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 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: Leah Fisher, Hanft Fride
Liaison to the MWL Board of Directors: Kay Biga, Spott Law Office

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 Wow Zone in Mankato.

President: Alyssa T. Nelson, Blethen Gage & Krause, PLLP
Vice President: Anna Fisher
Liaison to the MWL Board of Directors: KyLee Manthei, Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services

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 Hruby, Jardine, Logan & O’Brien
Secretary: Rebecca Baack, Eckberg, Lammers, Briggs Wolff & Vierling, PLLP
Treasurer: Mackenzie Campbell, Doar Drill & Skow
Liaison to the MWL Board of Directors: Anne Brown, Sjoberg & Tebelius, PA

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!

2018-2019 MWL Affinity Groups

Alternative Legal Careers

The goals in forming an Alternative Career Affinity Group is to 1) promote the many career options available to newer and more senior attorneys who choose not to practice but are still law school graduates; 2) provide professional development opportunities not related to practice but to the broad range of skills and experiences represented by the many alternative career attorneys in MWL, as well as potential members; 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 her law degree, rather than a secondary, less-preferred option to practicing law. Gatherings will be held on at least a quarterly basis, alternating between happy hour gatherings, lunch informal gatherings, and lunch programming. All MWL members are welcome to participate.

Co-Chairs:
Kendra Brodin, Briggs and Morgan, P.A.
Chandra Kilgriff, Robins Kaplan LLP
Ann Rainhart, Briggs and Morgan, P.A.

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 every other month from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Muffuletta in St. Paul. The group enjoys dinner together (pay on your own) and then spends an hour discussing the book selection for the month.

Chair:
Karen Bohaty, Attorney at Law

In-House

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 throughout the Metro, and will feature focused discussions led by a speaker, and more casual opportunities to connect with one another. All MWL members are welcome.

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 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 Reporting & Captioning
Nikki Keirnes, Keirnes Law Firm, PLLC

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, Barnes & Thornburg LLP
Barbara Klas, Casepoint
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.

Co-Chairs:
Beth Luoma, DuVal & Associates, P.A.
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 entities. Networking not only creates a sense of community but may also help members understand how different governmental agencies and entities function, facilitating their own jobs and building their understanding of how governmental entities 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 spacing for new lawyers to connect with each other and have fun while doing it. Gatherings will be held on at least a quarterly basis. All MWL members are welcome to participate.

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

2018-2019 MWL Committees

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 Northeast 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:
Angela Browning, Stinson Leonard Street LLP
Susan Gallagher, Gallagher Law Office, L.L.C.
Breia Schleuss, Faegre Baker Daniels, 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, specific practice area pipeline projects (judicial, firm, corporate, etc.), further development of MWL's Data Research Project, general oversight for and promotion of The MWL Compendium, and other related initiatives in support of MWL's Strategic Plan. The Equity Committee meets on the 3rd Thursday of the month at 8:30 am at the MWL office or via teleconference.

Co-Chairs:
Amy Boyle, Halunen Law
Kelly Clark, Beacon Hill Legal
Angela Keise,
Minnesota Attorney General's Office
Teresa Lavoie, Fish & Richardson, P.C.
Adine Momoh, Stinson Leonard Street LLP
Elizabeth Patton, Fox Rothschild LLP
Calandra Revering,
Revering Law and Consulting
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 Wednesday of the month from 12 pm to 1 pm via teleconference or at the MWL office.

Co-Chairs:
Lisa Lodin Peralta, Peralta Appellate Law PLLC
Amy Schmidt, City of Bloomington
Tina A. Syring, Cozen O'Connor
Lynn Walters, Walters Legal Services

Programming: CLE

The CLE Subcommittee coordinates specific 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 Tuesday of the month from 12 pm - 1 pm 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,
United States District Court, District of Minnesota
Laura Arneson, Mueting, Raasch & Gebhardt
Jennifer Wichelman, Bowman and Brooke

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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, 2018. 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.mwlattorneys.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.