

ISSUE NO. 17 Fall 2023

Newsletter

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FROM THE NEW YORK CHAPTER PRESIDENT

Dear Coalition Members, Casual Readers, and Friends,

I learned fast that when joining an organization, you can choose to either be a member or a leader. While organizations provide a path for professional development, a leadership position builds character. When joining organizations, I try to lead in some manner. I joined the Coalition because I was looking for an organization of peers who supported the same goals and interests that I had. Almost immediately upon joining the Coalition, I was offered a leadership position and embraced the opportunity.

I am the current President of the New York Chapter of the Coalition of Women's Initiatives in Law.

As the year comes close to its natural end, there is something about the Fall season which brings about so many different emotions. Reflection is one of them. With our calendars drawing near full with weekly appointments and now monthly commitments, it's critical to our mental health to carve out time for our own betterment. Taking time to reflect helps develop skills and encourages effectiveness and inner strength. Sometimes personal

and professional goals are inspired by reflection.

I recently attended a High School National Honor Society function and the studentpresenter, my daughter, referenced a quote that really resonated with me:

> "Character is like a tree, and reputation like its shadow. The shadow is what we think of it; the tree is the real thing." (Abraham Lincoln)

She explained that people should focus on building strong character and not necessarily be preoccupied by perception or judgment. Those are strong words for everyone regardless of age, professional title, or current predicament. When character is created, reputation will follow. With the support of each other, we can do both. If you're reading this, it is because the Coalition brought us together and makes the support possible. The Coalition is an organization of people who share common goals which strives to support and develop.

I have been a practicing attorney for over 20 years and started in a time where office





presence was a matter of judgment and where leaving work early to attend a personal function was not acknowledged. "Things" have since changed, and I applaud those who championed the right to do so. As a litigation attorney, many know that the hours are long, and client demands dictate. Because I have a passion for insurance coverage litigation, my mind travels to find novel interpretations and arguments that will compel a judicial finding that no doubt impacts the industry. When you are supported by strong colleagues and have clients that partner with you, litigation is fun. Yes, I said, fun and I mean it. The Coalition through its programming, quest lecturers, and networking events provides a great platform for an exchange of ideas and mentorship- regardless of age or experience. Our programs are both professionally and personally encouraging. They engage us as individuals and include participation amongst family members as well.

I am so proud of the Coalition and what we stand for and what we have accomplished. I am thankful to have met members of the NY Chapter who encouraged me to take a leadership role and to get involved in the organization. As with many organizations, leadership roles are a perfect way to communicate and act on ideas. I encourage everyone reading this newsletter to become involved in the Coalition's leadership. Character is like a tree. The Coalition is a driver of this reality.

Joanna Roberto New York Chapter President Gerber Ciano Kelly Brady LLP



The Power Of Sticky Recognition At Work

o you feel appreciated at work? When was the last time you were thanked for a job well done (or for anything)? Are you aware of the impact you're making? If you're like many employees today, the answer is a resounding no/not nearly enough! Leaders and companies weren't necessarily great at providing recognition before the pandemic, but the problem has worsened since. New work models make it hard for employees to keenly understand the impact they have, and leaders continue to struggle to spot behaviors worth recognizing (either due to remote work making it more difficult, general busyness, or both) and often don't do enough to amplify when they do see them..

Being slow to recognize has consequences. Respondents to a recent Deloitte workplace well-being survey cited lack of recognition as one of the three most detrimental leadership behaviors to their well-being. In a brand new survey I conducted with American Law Media, 44% of the nearly 900 lawyers and legal professionals who responded said lack of recognitionwasasourceofstress, citingthefrequency of being recognized by their colleagues for their work contributions as either once a month, a few times a year or less, or never. Lack of recognition is one of the core six drivers of burnout at work, along with unmanageable workload, lack of community, lack of autonomy, values disconnect, and unfairness. I have worked with thousands of leaders and teams since the beginning of the pandemic to address burnout concerns, and while unmanageable workload was the biggest source of stress for the teams and leaders with whom I spoke, lack of recognition was a close second.

In our lengthy workshop discussions, most leaders admitted that recognition wasn't something that they did well, and even if their teams or organizations did have some type of recognition or appreciation program, it was just that. A codified day to say "thanks" or a recognition check in based on years of service. Helpful, but nothing personal or specific creating what I call "sticky recognition." Sticky recognition is a specific way to show a person the evidence of their impact, and when that happens, important business and well-being outcomes follow.





When people clearly know the impact they have, it unlocks belonging, motivation, and trust and even acts as a stress buffer. Employees who strongly agree that recognition is an important part of an organization's culture are 3.7 times as likely to be engaged and almost half as likely to experience burnout as those who do not.

In addition, sticky recognition activates mattering, which powerfully counters feelings of low professional efficacy (confidence) and can reduce the cynicism dimension of burnout. To matter, people must feel valued (heard, appreciated, and cared for) and they must feel like they add value. It's a two-part definition: feeling valued and adding value. Lack of mattering is associated with burnout, self-criticism, anxiety, depression, and risk of suicide.

Further, researchers have found that people who express appreciation are seen as warmer, more competent and caring about others, and the people being thanked actually do extra work for them. To further prove this point, I have been collecting stories of sticky recognition from friends and strangers alike, and this one stuck out. A former practicing lawyer reported how many years ago she completed a mundane work task for a partner. When the partner called her after she turned in the assignment, she hesitated to take the call, not wanting to do more mundane work. When she answered, she discovered that the partner just wanted to thank her for a job well done, and he explained why the summaries she created were so beneficial. She said. "The whole conversation lasted maybe 120 seconds, but I still remember it almost 14 years later. And going forward, I said yes to any assignment he called with." The deeper reason why sticky recognition makes this so is because you feel valued and that fortifies relationships.

If creating a culture of sticky recognition is easy (you can literally do it right now), doesn't take much time (a couple of minutes or less in most cases), and is free, why don't we do it? This is low hanging work engagement fruit. Here are some reasons leaders have given to me:

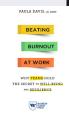
- Too busy I'm supposed to add this to my list of things to do now?
- Too focused on preventing mistakes that I forget to mention or don't amplify what's right
- It's not urgent I don't think that someone will walk out the door tomorrow because I didn't thank them today
- It's not my job to be your cheerleader
- You get a paycheck that's thanks enough
- It feels like "everyone gets a trophy" mentality

If this is your going in position about recognition and appreciation, then a mindset shift is needed. Recognition isn't about stroking someone's ego. It's about giving the people who you value the psychological fuel to feel engaged.

One easy strategy to create "sticky" recognition is a technique I use called a thank you "plus." Think of a person you need or want to recognize. When you say thank you, add a couple of additional sentences. This is the "why" or the "because." It's the behavior or the strength that you saw that generated the good outcome. This skill sounds easy, but it takes some practice.

Work is fast-paced, complex, uncertain, and stressful. Your most valuable asset - the people in your organization - can only take so much. Sticky recognition provides an easy and important entry point to help people cope with this stress. Being aware of your impact and knowing you matter - isn't that what we all want?

Paula Davis (https://www. stressandresilience.com) is the CEO of the Stress and Resilience Institute, and her





Chicago Chapter

CHICAGO CHAPTER HAPPENINGS

Navigating Generative AI & Legal Ethics

On Monday, June 26, 2023, the Programming Committee of the Chicago Chapter hosted a virtual program entitled "Navigating Generative AI and Legal Ethics." Three of our members combined forces to share insights on the use of AI from each of their perspectives as in-house corporate, employment litigation, and IP litigation attorneys. Coming off the heels of the Mata v. Avianca case, this insightful discussion about ethical rules and their application to AI, considerations for the use of GenAI in recruiting and other employment law contexts, and ownership and disclosure issues emerging in the intellectual property context was well-attended by about 65 of our members.

Eleventh Annual Judges Panel

On Wednesday, September 20, 2023, the Associates Committee of the Chicago Chapter hosted the Eleventh Annual Judges Panel at the offices of Coalition firm member Vedder Price. The well-attended event saw four esteemed judges share personal and direct insight about advocacy approaches they witness daily. Panel judges included the honorable Pamela Meyerson, the honorable Nancy Maldanado, the honorable Nichole Patton, and the honorable Carrie Hamilton. Each judge brought her wisdom and lengthy experience to a panel where attendees were given insightful information about the most common and yet often unspoken attorney habits

and practices that present in their courtrooms every day... information that is valuable to the most junior and senior attorneys alike. The Associates Committee is extremely happy to present this program every year, and look forward to the next one!



Practical Uses of Generative AI for In-House Counsel

On Thursday, September 7, 2023, the In-House Counsel Committee of the Chicago Chapter hosted Practical Uses of Generative AI at the offices of Coalition firm member Jones Day. The panelists provided a high-level explanation of how generative artificial intelligence works and discussed some practical use cases of generative AI for in-house attorneys. One panel member demonstrated her company's generative AI product and how in-house lawyers have used that tool. Panel members also delved into the risks of using generative AI tools by in-house counsel, including possible impacts on intellectual property. The well-attended event saw four esteemed judges share personal and direct insight about advocacy approaches they witness daily. Panel judges included the honorable Pamela Meyerson, the honorable Nancy Maldanado, the honorable Nichole Patton, and the honorable Carrie Hamilton. Each judge brought her wisdom and lengthy experience to a panel where attendees were given insightful information about the most common and yet often unspoken attorney habits and practices that present in their courtrooms every day... information that is valuable to the most junior and senior attorneys alike. The Associates Committee is extremely happy to present this program every year, and look forward to the next one!

Chicago Chapter

CHICAGO HAPPENINGS

The Coalition of Women's Initiatives in Law Annual Leadership Forum

For the fourteenth annual leadership forum, the Coalition focused on "elevating excellence through empowerment." The Chicago Chapter experienced this in more ways than one, congregating on the 80th floor of Willis Tower to honor women who have excelled in the law and empowered others to do the same.

The night started with an incredibly special keynote speaker, Michelle Banks. Michelle Banks is a co-author of the bestselling anthology "Women in Law: Discovering the True Meaning of Success." The anthology chronicles the career journeys of 23 women lawyers and is intended to inspire and empower people to define their own pathways to succeed in their lives. Michelle is an incredible storyteller who generously shared her favorite passages from the anthology including Pat Gillette's five basic principles to having a successful professional and personal life:

- 1. Ask for what you want.
- 2. Find a mentor.
- 3. Keep your priorities straight.
- 4. Get rid of perfect.
- 5. Be gracious, generous and genuine.

Attendees were made aware, throughout the night, of the different meanings of success and empowerment. The

Chicago Chapter honored Maria Maras, Associate Director of Accenture and winner of the Leadership Award. Maria has consistently been a leader both in her legal field of intellectual property and in her community by being a resource and role model for women navigating their careers. Jennifer E. Nichols, Executive Vice President of CRG was also present to accept the Inspiration Award, a byproduct of her advocacy and dedication to advancing gender parity and pay equity. Lastly, **Tiffany M. Ferguson** accepted the Benchmark Award on behalf of Allstate, a true global pioneer in the movement for female leadership and the value of diversity.

The Chicago Chapter also highlighted two of their scholarship recipients, Isabell Alcala and Da'Niya Phillips, who will no doubt follow their passions for the law to create change in their communities.

Overall, the event was a reminder of how strong, insightful, and capable women are to succeed and empower communities of women around the world. As Maria Maras reminded everyone in attendance, "if you want to go fast go alone, if you want to go far go together." The events of the night emphasized the Coalition's key role in creating a community that moves women forward, and establishing a workforce and world where excellence and empowerment is experienced by all.

Written by Maria Rossi, Senior Fellow at Seyfarth Shaw



















Chicago Chapter

CHICAGO CHAPTER HAPPENINGS

Energy Management with Arin Reeves

On Monday, September 25, 2023, the Programming Committee of the Chicago Chapter hosted Energy Management with Arin Reeves virtually. Arin provided a dynamic presentation with infographics and visuals for energy saving tools and practical tips in daily practice to reset life especially with the upcoming holidays.



CHICAGO MEMBER SPOTLIGHT Ally Pruitt, Gordon Rees Scully Mansukhani, LLP



Why did you join the Coalition?

I joined the Coalition because I wanted to join a community of women dedicated to supporting and uplifting one another in both their careers, and in their personal endeavors. The women I

have met thus far have been nothing but helpful, kind, and supportive.

What positions have you held in the Coalition?

I haven't yet held any positions, but I am always on the lookout for ways to get more involved. I have attended a variety of events, and each one has been meaningful and impactful in its own way. My favorite event was the Career Development Day we hosted at the Maryville Center's Mother's Recovery Home Network. We had the absolute honor of sitting down with some incredible women and preparing them for the careers of their dreams through resume review, mock interviews, and coordinating interview attire. The women, their beautiful babies, and the Maryville staff were so kind and welcoming. It was an honor, and I can't wait to go back!

Describe what you do.

I am an associate at Gordon Rees Scully Mansukhani, LLP, practicing primarily in commercial litigation and labor & employment. I have litigated, mediated, and negotiated a variety of cases on behalf of clients before administrative agencies, including the IDHR and EEOC, and in various courts across the country. My work includes wrongful death suits, nightclub shootings, nursing home actions, real estate disputes, employment discrimination matters and more. I also draft and implement anti-discrimination policies and procedures, discipline, work performance polices, leave policies, and workplace accommodations for employers. No day is the same in my practice, and I wouldn't have it any other way. I truly love what I do, and thoroughly enjoy working with my clients to resolve matters in the most efficient and seamless way possible.

In addition to my legal practice, I am an adjunct professor at my alma mater, University of Illinois Chicago School of Law. I also am the CEO/Founder of a non-profit organization called The Impact Project, Inc. We work with youth in underserved communities by providing resources, mentorship, and guidance. The organization, as well as teaching, hold a place near and dear to my heart as I truly love uplifting and encouraging the next generation of young professionals. I

Continued on page 7





firmly believe your success is defined by the positive impact you leave on others.

What is the best career advice you ever received?

"Don't change for the profession, make the profession change for you." This advice came on the heels of my time at the Cook County Public Defender's Office where I was a 711-intern during law school. As a young woman, and first-generation student, preparing to enter the practice of law, I often felt overwhelming feelings of imposter syndrome. Did I belong? Would I succeed? Should I change who I was to "fit" into this profession?

A mentor of mine made it incredibly clear - be YOU. And that I did. At every turn, I have done my best to embrace the profession and make it my own. When I speak with students or other young women, I always tell them to believe in their own story. Tell it without fear. Share where you come from and what matters to you. Talk about your failures and your faults - everyone learns more from those than we do our successes. Be unapologetically yourself and surround yourself with the people who love you for it.

This profession is not a one-size-fits-all. Be YOU!

Tell us something interesting about yourself that others may not know.

My background is in sports journalism. I received my Bachelor's Degree in Journalism from DePaul University. From there, I made my way to NBC Sports Chicago where I worked throughout law school. Some of my best memories are appearing on 670 The Score to talk all things college football with my friend and mentor Laurence Holmes, covering Lollapalooza, working Authentic Fan Nights, and interviewing former Chicago Bears' athletes on NFL Draft Night. I also worked for DePaul's athletic program and often appeared on FOX Sports as I sat at the scorer's table to write game reports. I interviewed some of the best, including Max Strus with the Cleveland Cavaliers, Paul Reed with the Philadelphia 76ers, and Jalen Brunson with the New York Knicks. I remain a huge sports fan and could not be more grateful for my time in journalism. It will always hold a special place in my heart.

Coffee or Tea?

Coffee. Always, always coffee.

New York Chapter

NEW YORK HAPPENINGS

An Evening at the Ainsworth!

The NY Chapter along with Gerber Ciano Kelly Brady LLP held a rooftop networking event at The Ainsworth to foster professional relationships and friendships. The event provided a chance to interact with industry professionals and to build strong connections with one another. A fun evening was had by all!



New York Chapter

NEW YORK HAPPENINGS

Book Chat and Virtual Cooking Class with Desirée Moore, K&L Gates **Partner**

As part of our Literary Lawyers series, we hosted Desirée Moore. In addition to leading the Crisis Planning & Response solution for K&L Gates, Desirée is the author of the book, Foodie Tales, a family cookbook inspired by classic children's literature, where each recipe is based upon a beloved children's book, which may be purchased here.. We enjoyed hearing Desirée talk about her experience in writing her book, and managing her law practice, while cooking along with our families to recipes for salmon inspired by the Dr. Seuss book, One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish, roasted green



vegetables inspired by Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day by Judith Viorst, and carrot cake inspired by Superfairies: Adventures in Peaseblossom Woods by Janey Louise Jones.

Lessons Learned... from Children's **Books**

Joanna Roberto of the NY Chapter moderated a workshop on professional communication and flexible thinking with Mediator Sylvia Mayer. The professional takeaways were invaluable when addressing how to breach the bully barrier in workplace settings and reminding us how important it is to be a chameleon in an environment so we can adapt to

everchanging situations. It was a powerful session filled with advice and suggestions all tied to children's booksthank you Sylvia!



The Coalition of Women's Initiatives in Law Annual Leadership Forum









New York Chapter

NEW YORK MEMBER SPOTLIGHT Maria Famiglietti, Gerber Ciano Kelly Brady LLP



Why did you join the Coalition?

I joined the Coalition after my supervising attorney invited me to join her at one of their summer events in New York City. After meeting and speaking with the successful and diverse women, I was

instantly inspired by their life stories and careers, as well as their passion for carrying out the organization's mission. As I grow in my career, I plan to carry out the views of the Coalition and its members. I hope to continue to expand my professional network, cultivate/foster meaningful relationships, and become a member that one can rely on to help address the many challenges facing women lawyers today. I look forward to actively contributing to the New York Chapter.

Describe what you do.

I am a newly admitted attorney in coverage solutions, where I primarily focus on drafting coverage opinions and handling litigation. I hold a B.B.A. in International Business and before law school, I spent four years in the financial industry. I find that my diverse background and work experience provide a unique approach to critical thinking and problem-solving in the legal industry.

What was your first job?

When I was a teenager, I used to babysit and help with monthly mailings at a local country club. However, my first "true" job was when I was a sales associate at a local Banana Republic. I acquired numerous indispensable life lessons and skills that will remain with me forever, such as time management and interpersonal skills.

What is the best career advice you ever received?

The best advice I ever received was to never give up! Life has many obstacles and will throw many challenges your way, but if you put your mind to something, you will persevere and achieve your goals. These words have carried me through many journeys, including applying to and attending law school as well as passing the bar exam!

Tell us something interesting about you that people may not know

I am a big sports fan—from hockey to baseball to golf! I have attended countless games and matches, including the 2023 Ryder Cup in Rome, Italy. In 2019, I won a sweepstakes where I had the opportunity to announce "Rider's Up" live on NBC Sports at the Belmont Stakes.

To what do you attribute your success?

My grandmother. As a young girl growing up in rural Italy during the great depression and World War II, she unable to attend school past the 5th grade. Her story, her love for learning, and her encouragement inspired me to pursue all my dreams. She always reminded me to never shy away or pass up on opportunities that challenged me. To this day, I owe my courage and love for learning to her.

Coffee or Tea?

Coffee, extra ice!

Washington, D.C. Chapter

WASHINGTON, D.C. HAPPENINGS AND NEWS

Working Parents Committee

Thanks to the Working Parents Committee for organizing our Fall Family Picnic at Cabin John Regional Park on Saturday. **September 9**. We had a wonderful time with our members and their families enjoying the final days of summer!



The Value of Non-Profit Board Service

On **Thursday**, **September 14** we held a lively panel discussion on The Value of Non-Profit Board Service - Your Career and Community, followed by a networking reception on the rooftop of **Vedder Price's** office. Thank you to our Programming Committee Co-Chairs Erica Gerson and Sarah Ma for organizing a great event. Erica was also kind enough to moderate the discussion with our panelists Amy Bess (Shareholder, Vedder Price and Board Member, District of Columbia Coalition Against Domestic Violence). Nadira Clarke (Partner, Baker Botts and President of Legal Aid DC's Board of Trustees) and Rachel Evans (Chief Executive Officer of CityBridge Education).





DC Chapter Awards

The DC Chapter would also like to congratulate the following Board Members, who were recognized by Super Lawyers 2023

- Lauren Azebu, Steptoe & Johnson LLP, Tax Law (Rising Star)
- Nicole Kobrine, Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP, Business Litigation/Construction Litigation
- Melissa Kopit, Gibson Dunn & Crutcher, Aviation Law (Rising Star)
- Sarah Ma, Alston & Bird, Tax Law (Rising Star)
- Gwendolyn Roy-Harrison, Offit Kurman, Real Estate and Civil Litigation (Rising Star)
- Elizabeth Yaeger, Greenberg Traurig LLP, Real Estate (Rising Star)

- Melissa Kopit, Gibson Dunn & Crutcher, Banking and Finance Law/Project Finance Law (Ones to Watch)
- Gwendolyn Roy-Harrison, Offit Kurman P.A., Real Estate Litigation (Ones to Watch)

The DC Chapter would like to congratulate the following Board Members, who were recognized by **Best Lawyers 2024**:

- Lauren Azebu, Steptoe & Johnson LLP, Tax Law (Ones to Watch)
- Marjorie Just, Offit Kurman P.A., Family Law
- Nicole Kobrine, Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP, Commercial Litigation

Washington D.C. Chapter

WASHINGTON D.C. MEMBER SPOTLIGHT Elizabeth Yaeger, Greenberg Traurig



Why did you join the Coalition?

I joined the Coalition because I could not pass up the opportunity to connect with other women attorneys in a meaningful and impactful way. Being able to build friendships with women who

understand and have been through similar experiences has been invaluable. From our courageous and thoughtful group of women, I have received support, and helped other women, through the highs and lows of practicing law. Aside from that, but just as important, I wanted the opportunity to help mentor other women in navigating what is still a very male dominant industry to help make sure that our numbers in the industry continue to grow not just at the associate level, but also in upper tier management positions within law firms and corporations.

What positions have you held in the Coalition?

Since about 2019, I have served various roles, including being a member of the Associates Committee and the Working Parents Committee. I have also served as a Board Member and am currently the Treasurer.

Describe what you do.

I am a real estate and digital infrastructure shareholder at Greenberg Traurig. I advise real estate and digital infrastructure investors, owners, operators, and lenders in transactions involving all real estate asset classes, including data centers and mixed-use multifamily projects.

What is the best career advice you ever received?

Be unafraid to communicate and assert your career and financial goals. Prior to practicing in big law, I was fortunate enough to work with very strong and ambitious women in corporate America. Those women mentored me and taught me the importance of effectively communicating my goals with upper management. Throughout my career, I have made it a point to always be transparent (and some could say insistent) about those goals with decisionmakers.

Tell us something interesting about you that people may not know.

I hiked and camped on the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu for 4 days and 3 nights. It was a very defining experience for me in learning what you can achieve if the mindset is that there is no turning back. There were many instances during the first day of the hike that I thought I would not be able to make it through to the end because the level of physical exertion required at that altitude was not something I had ever experienced. I quickly had to reset my mentality to take on the hike literally as one step at a time instead of obsessing on the difficult 3 additional days ahead. Admittedly, it also helped to acknowledge that the only two ways off the trail were via emergency helicopter or to complete the hike at Machu Picchu. As a broke law school student, using a helicopter to get off the trail was obviously a non-starter.

Coffee or Tea?

Cuban coffee but really Coke Zero.











Questions or Comments?

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