



CALIFORNIA WOMEN LAWYERS
NEWSLETTER
WINTER 2024

Message from the CWL President

Jodi Cleesattle



Dear Members and Friends,

Happy 50th anniversary to California Women Lawyers!

I am so honored to serve as president of CWL this year and so excited to be leading this organization as we celebrate our 50th anniversary.

CWL was born in 1974 at a time when it was still legal for states to exclude women from serving on juries, it was still legal to discriminate against pregnant women, and women had only just won the right to open bank accounts and credit cards in their own names. Women accounted for only about 20 percent of all law students, about 6 percent of lawyers, and less than 4 percent of judges in the United States in 1974.

Against this backdrop, a group of trailblazing women in California decided to join forces to amplify their voices and work to advance women in the legal profession, improve the administration of justice, better the position of women in society, and end gender discrimination.

The idea for a statewide women’s bar association was raised during a women’s caucus at the 1974 California State Bar convention in Sacramento, and an organizing committee was formed, co-chaired by San Francisco attorney Joanne Garvey and Los Angeles attorney Roberta Ralph. The committee set to

work, and a constitutional convention was held in San Diego, organized by Lynn Schenk. From there, the committee appointed a provisional board, and the group took up the task of drafting CWL’s bylaws and founding documents at a “slumber party” at the home of CWL’s provisional president, Hon. Joan Dempsey Klein. The provisional board elected CWL’s first official president, Judith McKelvey, who served from 1975-1976.

Over the course of the next 50 years, women lawyers have made much progress. In 2023, women made up more than 56 percent of law students in American Bar Association-accredited law schools, 39 percent of practicing lawyers, and about 34 percent of state judges and 32 percent of federal judges nationally. But despite incremental gains, women still accounted for less than 23 percent of equity partners at law firms in 2022, and women of color accounted for barely over 4 percent of partners, according to the National Association for Law Placement’s 2022 Report on Diversity.

And, of course, women have suffered significant setbacks to their legal rights. The reproductive rights recognized by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1973 in *Roe v. Wade* were stripped away by that court in 2022 in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization*, and legal challenges to women’s bodily autonomy continue.

In CWL’s 50th anniversary year, as always, we are committed to fighting for women’s rights, to fighting against discrimination of all kinds, and to uplifting women in the legal profession and in society.

We hope you will join us in this work, as well as in our celebration of CWL’s 50th anniversary.

Jodi Cleesattle, President

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jodi Cleesattle". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "J" and "C".



CWL

WINTER 2024
NEWSLETTER

2024 CWL Board Officers

CWL President Jodi Cleesattle

CWL President-Elect Pa'tanisha Davis Pierson

Immediate Past President Mika Domingo

First Vice-President Michele Anderson

Second Vice-President Lorrina Duffy

Secretary Michelle Philo

Treasurer Beverly Brand

Executive Committee Member At Large Jennifer Hartmann King

Executive Committee Member At Large Claire Melehani

Editor Jodi Cleesattle

Additional Photography Gettyimages

CWL was chartered in 1974. It was organized "to advance women in the profession of law; to improve the administration of justice; to better the position of women in society; to eliminate all inequities based on gender; and to provide an organization for collective action and expression germane to the aforesaid purposes."

The purposes are limited to purposes meeting the requirements for exemption provided in Section 2370le of the Revenue and Taxation Code and Section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code as the statutes may be amended from time to time.

Thank you to all the authors in this issue for sharing with us their time and expertise.

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in these articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of CWL.

For more information on CWL or this newsletter, please contact the CWL office at 916.930.9020 or visit the website at www.cwl.org.

CWL Member News

CWL is proud of the work its members do on behalf of our organization and the profession, and we believe in sharing your achievements. Please help us share your news. In this edition, we're thrilled to share the recognition given to several CWL members.

HONORED

The American Bar Association Section of Civil Rights and Social Justice honored **Drucilla Stender Ramey**, one of CWL's founding mothers, with its Father Robert F. Drinan Award for Distinguished Service at a virtual reception Jan. 25. Ramey, who serves on the Public Advocates Board, serves as special counsel to the Civil Rights and Social Justice Section and is a longtime section leader. The award recognizes her work on behalf of the section and in civil rights and human rights.



Ramey has held multiple leadership positions, including dean emerita of the Golden Gate University School of Law and executive director of the National Association of Women Judges, and she was the first woman chair of the board of directors of the ACLU of Northern California. Formerly a Nader Raider and MALDEF attorney specializing in tri-ethnic school desegregation cases, she led the Bar Association of San Francisco (BASF) as its executive director and general counsel and co-founded the California Minority Counsel Program and other initiatives.

CWL MEMBERS ON THE BENCH

Past CWL board member **Latrice Byrdsong** was elected Commissioner by the judges of the Los Angeles County Superior Court in September. Prior to her election, Byrdsong was an ERISA and Executive Compensation attorney and previously served as in-house counsel at DaVita HealthCare Partners Inc., Southern California Edison, and US Airways, and as an associate at McDermott Will & Emery and Morgan Lewis & Bockius LLP. Byrdsong had served as a CWL District 7 Governor since 2022, and she co-chaired CWL's In-House Counsel Network.



Let us lift you up. Tell us when you've won an honor or award or attained a special achievement. Contact us at newsletter@cwl.org.





**In Memoriam:
Candace Carroll, CWL President, 2003-2004**

California Women Lawyers was saddened to learn that past president Candace Carroll passed away January 24, 2024, at the age of 79.

Carroll, who served as CWL president from 2003-2004, was a highly regarded appellate practitioner, and she served in many leadership roles throughout her legal career.

In addition to serving as CWL president, Carroll was a past president of the San Diego County Bar Association and a long-time member of CWL affiliate Lawyers Club of San Diego, and she served for seven years as chair of Senator Barbara Boxer's Judicial Advisory Committee for the Southern District of California. She also served on the boards of directors of the San Diego Opera and the San Diego Convention Center Corporation.

Carroll received the 2018 Outstanding Attorney Award from the San Diego County Bar Association and was recognized as a Super Lawyer in the field of Appellate Law, as a Top San Diego Lawyer, and as one of the Best Lawyers in America in the field of Commercial Litigation.

"Candace Carroll was a trailblazer who gave so much back to the legal community and the broader community," CWL president Jodi Cleesattle said. "She was an inspiration in San Diego, where she was only the fifth woman to serve as president of the San Diego County Bar Association and where she served on the boards of so many legal and civic organizations. And she was an inspiration to women lawyers throughout the state, serving as president of California Women Lawyers from 2003 to 2004. A gifted appellate lawyer, a trusted leader, and a dedicated volunteer, Candy will be greatly missed."

Carroll practiced with Sullivan Hill Rez & Engel in San Diego for 30 years. Prior to joining the firm, she spent seven years in the Appellate Court Branch of the National Labor Relations Board in Washington, D.C., and a year serving as a court law clerk to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. She received her B.B.A., Phi Beta Kappa, from George Washington University, and her J.D., with honors, Order of the Coif, from Duke University Law School.

She also taught seminars on advanced legal writing at Duke University and University of San Diego Law School, and for several years supervised a Ninth Circuit Legal Clinic at the University of San Diego Law School.

CWL is grateful to Candace Carroll for her contributions to CWL, her years of service and good works, and her dedication to women's equality.



2023 CWL Annual Dinner

ATTENDEES GET FIRED UP AT ANNUAL GALA

Guests gathered in San Diego Sept. 21 got a glimpse of the almost 50-year history of California Women Lawyers and got fired up for the future at CWL's 2023 Annual Dinner.

The annual dinner – with the theme "Fired Up – What Are You Fighting For?" – featured a video of CWL's founding mothers recounting the organization's creation in 1974, a fireside chat with California Supreme Court Associate Justice Kelli Evans, and a rousing speech by powerhouse trial lawyer Gloria Allred, who received CWL's 2023 Fay Stender Award.

The event, held at the San Diego Marriot Marquis, on San Diego Bay, began with a reception and silent auction benefiting the CWL Foundation, which raises money for CWL's annual scholarships.

Outgoing president Mika Domingo kicked off the dinner with welcome remarks before the 2024 CWL board was sworn in by California Chief Justice Patricia Guerrero, who also gave remarks.



Fourth District Court of Appeal Presiding Justice Judith McConnell moderated the fireside chat with Evans, the keynote speaker, with the conversation covering everything from Evans' childhood in Denver raised by her grandmother to her legal career working in the criminal justice and civil rights arenas to her love of the artist Prince.





Evans, who joined the California Supreme Court in January 2023 after many years in public service and after serving on the Alameda County Superior Court bench, is the first openly lesbian justice on the Supreme Court and the second openly LGBTQ+ justice. Prior to being appointed to the Superior Court in 2019, Evans was chief deputy legal affairs secretary for Governor Gavin Newsom, advising the governor and executive agencies on a range of legal, policy, and legislative issues. Throughout her career, she worked as an assistant public defender, an ACLU attorney and associate director, a senior trial attorney in the U.S. Justice Department's Civil Rights Division, a senior director for the California State Bar, and a Special Assistant to the Attorney General at the California Department of Justice.



CWL presented the 2023 Fay Stender Award – which honors those who represent women, disadvantaged people and unpopular causes with courage – to Gloria Allred, a well-known advocate for victims' rights. During Allred's remarks, she recounted her representation of a lesbian couple denied service at a Los Angeles restaurant, her representation of an actress fired for becoming pregnant, her successful battle to integrate the Friars Club, and more.



The CWL Foundation presented the 2023 Nancy E. O'Malley Scholarship to Anna Judson, a second-year student and Human Rights Fellow at UC Berkeley School of Law. Judson, a former foster youth, gave inspiring remarks about the work she is doing and has done to advocate for and help foster youth, including co-leading the Foster Education Project at Berkeley Law.

To help kick off CWL's 50th anniversary year in 1974, CWL screened a portion of "Lessons from Our Mothers," a video created in 2009 as a project of the CWL Foundation and produced by the Alameda County District Attorney's Office.

The video featured CWL founding mothers – including Drucilla Stender Ramey; Hon. Joan Dempsey Klein (dec.), former Presiding Justice of Second District Court of Appeal, Division Three; Lynn Schenk; Joanne Garvey (dec.); Blanche Bersch; Louise Renne; and Edna Alvarez – recalling how the idea for CWL was born at the 1974 State Bar annual meeting and how the organization was then established during a "slumber party" at Joan Dempsey Klein's home in Sherman Oaks. The full video is available online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9A0XD40VGhU&t=784s>.

Incoming 2024 CWL president Jodi Cleesattle gave remarks reflecting on CWL's history and present-day advocacy and urging members and friends to keep working toward equality.



"Women, and women lawyers, have come a long way since 1974, but there is still a long way to go," Cleesattle said. "As we move forward, we remember where we've been. We honor those who came before us, and we carry on their work. As we enter CWL's 50th year, we are fired up. We hope you are, too."

The annual dinner wrapped up with a live auction benefiting the CWL Foundation, featuring an original painting of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg painted by David Majchrzak, past president of the San Diego County Bar Association, and a wine refrigerator stocked with wine, donated by Pa'tanisha Davis Pierson, Michelle Philo, and LevittQuinn.

CWL thanks the sponsors of CWL's 2023 Annual Dinner, including: Silver Sponsor Rosen Bien Galvan & Grunfeld LLP; Bronze Sponsors: Alternative Resolution Centers; Casey Gerry Schenk Francavilla Blatt & Penfield LLP; Hanna Brophy; Hartman King PC; Judicate West; Klinedinst PC; and Wilson Turner Kosmo

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CWL also thanks Annual Dinner Committee chair Jodi Cleesattle, Silent Auction chair Ana Storey, and committee members Michele Anderson, Pa'tanisha Davis Pierson, Mika Domingo, Mikhak Ghorban, and Jennifer Hartman King, as well as CWL executive director Teresa Excinia and the CWL team at California Advocates, Jennifer Blevins, John Berkowitz, Maddy Dowler, Kelly Hoskins, Stephanie Schoen, Cameron Schubert, and Trish Slattery.







THANK YOU TO OUR 2023 DINNER SPONSORS



Michele Anderson



SAVE *the* DATE



**ANNUAL CONFERENCE
& DINNER
11.8.24**

HOTEL NIKKO, SAN FRANCISCO

CWL Welcomes New Officers for 2024 Board

A new year brings new leadership to CWL, as 2023 president Mika Domingo passes the gavel to 2024 president Jodi Cleesattle, and other board members step into new leadership roles.

This year's officers make up a diverse – and entrepreneurial – group. Four officers are founders of their own firms, while three work for government agencies. Cleesattle is believed to be only the second openly LGBTQ+ president of CWL, while immediate past president Domingo was the first Filipino-American president.



**President
Jodi Cleesattle**

Jodi Cleesattle is the Senior Assistant Attorney General for the Tort and Condemnation Section of the California Department of Justice, where she is responsible for supervising the litigation of difficult and sensitive cases involving government tort liability. She is based in San Diego. She previously was a Supervising Deputy Attorney General in the DOJ's Employment and Administrative Mandate Section. Before joining the DOJ, Cleesattle was a partner with a Washington, D.C.-based national law firm and, prior to her legal career, was a newspaper reporter and founding editor of The National Jurist magazine.

Cleesattle has served on the CWL Board of Governors since 2017 and was on the executive committee for the past two years. She was chair of the Annual Dinner Committee, which planned and organized the 2023 Annual Dinner, and she has chaired the Amicus Committee for the past three years. During her tenure as Amicus Committee chair, CWL has joined dozens of amicus briefs and coordinated the drafting and filing of three amicus briefs of its own. Cleesattle also previously served as editor of the CWL Newsletter.

Cleesattle is active in numerous local, state and national bar

associations, and she is currently co-president of San Diego's Tom Homann LGBTQ+ Law Association. She also is a founding member of the San Diego Unity Bar.

She previously served on the boards of the San Diego County Bar Association and Lawyers Club of San Diego. She has served as chair of the California Lawyers Association's Public Law Section and co-chair of the Council of State Bar Sections, the State Bar predecessor to CLA's Board of Representatives. She also is active in the National Association of Women Judges, serving on NAWJ's LGBTQ+ Committee, Fairness and Access Committee, and Judicial Independence Committee.

She serves on the board of and previously was president of Juvenile Court Book Club, a nonprofit that provides tutoring and book clubs for teens incarcerated in San Diego County, and she volunteers cooking meals for Rachel's Women's Center.

Cleesattle was named the 2021 Ronald M. George Public Lawyer of the Year by the California Lawyers Association, and she received the 2014 Community Service Award from Lawyers Club of San Diego.

She is co-author of *Losing Our [Best] Minds: Addressing the Attrition Crisis of Women Lawyers in a Post-Pandemic World*, published by the California Lawyers Association.

Cleesattle received her B.A. in Communications, cum laude, from American University in Washington, D.C., and received her J.D., summa cum laude, from American University's Washington College of Law.

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**President-Elect
Pa'tanisha Davis Pierson**

Pa'tanisha E. Davis Pierson, Esq. is an attorney and author of *Barren, But Not Broken: A Guide from Infertility to Adoption*. She is a native of Oakland, California. Pierson's first name, Pa'tanisha, name means reconciler of differences, and that is exactly what she does in her career. She is a partner with Key Counsel, P.C. in Antioch. Her primary practice areas are in Probate, Guardianships, Conservatorships, Housing, Civil Litigation and Adoption.

Pierson was elected to the Brentwood City Council in Contra Costa County in 2022, representing District 2. She also serves as a Pro Tem Judge with the Contra Costa County Superior Court, and she has taught the Housing Clinic and Legal Methods at John F. Kennedy University School of Law.

She joined the CWL board as a District 3 Governor in 2021 and served as secretary in 2022. She chairs the 2024 Annual Dinner Committee, Education Committee, and Strategic Planning Committee, and she is a past chair of CWL's Diversity, Equity, Belonging & Inclusion Committee. Pierson is a past president of the Contra Costa County Bar Association Women's Section.

She has a B.A. in Psychology from Tuskegee University, an M.A. in Organizational Psychology/Change Leadership from California School of Professional Psychology, and a J.D. from John F. Kennedy University School of Law.



**First Vice President
Michele B. Anderson**

Michele Anderson is a career prosecutor with the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office. As a Deputy City Attorney and special prosecutor, she has handled a myriad of cases, including real estate mortgage fraud, child pornography, wage and hour violations, domestic violence, identity theft, and driving under the influence. She is certified as a drug recognition expert and instructor and is also certified as a loan signing agent and notary. Anderson also has served as a temporary judge.

She has served as a District 7 Governor for CWL since 2019. She chairs the Annual Conference Committee and co-chairs the Diversity, Equity, Belonging & Inclusion Committee.

Anderson is a lifetime member of and serves on the boards of the John M. Langston Bar Association, Black Women Lawyers of Los Angeles, Inc., and the California Association of Black Lawyers. She is a member of the Los Angeles County Bar Association's Board of Trustees and serves on the executive board and is a past chair of LACBA's Criminal Justice section. She also is chair of the California Conference of Bar Associations and is past chair of LACBA's delegation to the CCBA.

Anderson received her bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Irvine and her J.D. from Southwestern University School of Law.



**Second Vice President
Lorrina Duffy**

Lorrina M. Duffy is the founder and principal of QDRO Experts, a law firm focused exclusively on the division of retirement accounts in divorce proceedings. She is a member of the "QDRONES," a national study group comprised of QDRO attorneys and pension valuation experts. Prior to becoming a QDRO Expert, Duffy worked as a staff attorney for the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles, where she represented survivors of domestic violence in child custody, restraining order, and divorce cases and represented low-income clients with issues such as financial elder abuse, fraud, and unfair debt collection.

Duffy has served as a CWL District 7 Governor since 2021, and she serves on the Amicus Committee, Diversity, Equity, Belonging & Inclusion Committee, and Education Committee.

Duffy previously served on the Board of Directors for the Harriett Buhai Center for Family Law and is a past president of the Latina Lawyers Bar Association.

She received her B.A. from the University of California, Santa Cruz, and obtained her J.D. from University of California College of the Law San Francisco (formerly the University of California, Hastings College of the Law).



**Treasurer
Beverly Brand**

Beverly Brand is Assistant Chief Counsel for the Policy Approval Bureau at the California Department of Insurance. Her practice focuses on regulatory matters involving disability income, accidental death and dismemberment, and similar types of insurance.

Before joining the Department, Brand was Of Counsel with the Lesser Law Group and the Doctor Law Group, and was in house counsel at Fireman's Fund Insurance Company. Her practice emphasized general business litigation, insurance coverage, insurance bad faith, and regulatory matters. Prior to that, Brand was in the San Francisco office of Barger & Wolen, where she concentrated on civil and business litigation, including breach of contract, unfair competition, and life and disability insurance disputes. Brand has considerable experience in most areas of insurance, including general liability, property and casualty, professional liability, personal lines, life, and disability.

She is active in the Queen's Bench Bar Association in the San Francisco Bay Area, for which she served as president in 2022, and she has served on the Queen's Bench Foundation and co-chaired the Queen's Bench Juvenile Hall Project. Brand also served on the Insurance Committee of the California Law Association's Business Law Section for six years, including as secretary.

She is a graduate of George Washington University and University of California, Hastings College of the Law.



Secretary
Michelle Philo

Michelle A. Philo is the principal at Philo Law Firm, P.C., where she provides trust administration and litigation, probate and probate litigation, and estate planning to individuals and families. She also provides concierge General Counsel services to small business owners. With her broad knowledge, Philo provides small businesses with the convenience of working with one key lawyer to manage all of their outside counsel and provide immediate assistance with contracts, compliance, employment matters, and protecting intellectual property.

Prior to launching her own firm, Philo served as General Counsel for a technology company focused on motion engagement and virtual reality for mobile devices. Philo started her legal career at a mid-size firm doing business litigation, business transactions, and estate planning.

She has been active in the legal community since becoming a lawyer and has served as the president of Orange County Women Lawyers Association and its Foundation, president of the Chapman University Alumni Association, president of the Whittier Law School Alumni Association, and chair of the Orange County Bar Association’s Young Lawyers Division. Philo has also served in the American Bar Association’s California State Bar Delegation to the House of Delegates for seven years.

Philo received her B.A. from Chapman University and her J.D. from Whittier Law School.



Immediate Past President
President, CWL Foundation
Mika Domingo

Michelle “Mika” Domingo is the Managing Attorney of M.S. Domingo Law Group, P.C., in Walnut Creek. She represents people throughout California in matters involving Probate and Trust Litigation, Probate Administration, Trust Administration, Estate Planning, and Conservatorships.

She began her legal career in civil rights litigation as a Deputy Attorney General with the California Department of Justice, before moving to private practice. She started M.S. Domingo Law Group in 2017.

Domingo has served on the board of CWL for nine years and was on the executive committee for the past three years. She served as co-chair of the Judicial Evaluations Committee for seven years and as chair of the 2022 Annual Dinner Committee, and she has been active in various CWL committees.

She also has served on the Contra Costa County Bar Association Executive Board, is a past president of the Contra Costa County Bar Association’s Women’s Section, and has served on the board of Women Lawyers of Alameda County. She also served on the State Bar of California’s Committee of Bar Examiners for four years. She currently serves as Co-Director of Professional Development for the Filipino Bar Association of Northern California and Director of the California Asian Pacific American Bar Association (Cal-APABA), for which she co-chaired the 2023 Annual Conference, “Empowering APA Women.”

Domingo graduated with honors from University of California, Berkeley and earned her J.D., with honors, from John F. Kennedy University School of Law.



New District Governors Join CWL’s Board

The 2024 CWL Board of Governors welcomes four new district governors, who took office in January and will serve two-year terms.

Three members were newly elected in District Governor elections in September, while one other member was appointed to fill a vacancy on the board. Five other district governors were reelected.

Uche Anene and Camille Townsend Granville were elected as District 7 governors representing Los Angeles County, and Vaani Chawla was elected as a District 9 governor representing San Diego and Imperial counties. Carmela Pagay was appointed in October to fill a District 7 governor seat vacated when Latrice Byrdsong was elected as a Los Angeles Superior Court Commissioner.

Continuing their service on the Board of Governors, Jennifer Hartman King was reelected to a third term as District 2 governor; Pa’tanisha Davis Pierson was reelected to a second term as a District 3 governor; Jessica Stender was reelected to a second term as a District 4 governor; Terri Hilliard Olson was reelected to a second term as District 6 governor; and Michele Anderson was reelected to a third term as one of five District 7 governors.

Placer County Superior Court Judge Suzanne Gazzaniga joins the CWL board as Northern California judicial liaison, joining Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Marguerite Downing, who will continue serving as Southern California judicial liaison.

MEET THE NEW DISTRICT GOVERNORS:



Uche Winnie Anene
District 7 Governor

Uche Winnie Anene is in-house counsel for AT&T in Los Angeles, providing guidance on various contractual matters related to global business enterprise, helping her business clients expand the company’s supplier reach and generate revenue in the healthcare and manufacturing sectors. She began her legal career at DIRECTV, later acquired by AT&T, and has been with the company for over eight years serving in various roles. In addition to her work responsibilities, Anene is also dedicated to furthering the company’s diversity and pro bono incentives, serving as the chair of the West Region, AT&T Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee and co-chair of the West Region, AT&T Pro Bono Committee.

She will co-chair CWL’s In-House Counsel Network this year and also is serving on the Education Committee and Membership Committee.

Anene also currently serves as treasurer of the Black Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles, Inc. (BWL) and has served in various roles since 2018, including as co-chair of the BWL Young Lawyers Committee and as a member of the BWL Scholarship Selection Committee. She has also served on the Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles’ Young Lawyers Committee, and she participated in the 2021 Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD) Pathfinders Program, designed for diverse, high-potential, early-career attorneys.

While in these various roles, Anene has organized programs on topics such as Black women and the partnership track, student loan repayment, PPP loans for small Black-owned business and solo firms, and a seminar on the housing moratorium and homeownership.

Anene received her undergraduate degree from the University of Southern California and her law degree from Trinity Law School.



Camille Townsend Granville
District 7 Governor

Camille Townsend Granville is Lead Counsel with Airbnb in Los Angeles, where she advises business operations regarding employment matters, personnel, and employee relations issues. She has also served on Airbnb’s global Diversity & Belonging leadership team.

Granville has been practicing law for over 17 years. She previously was Assistant County Counsel for Los Angeles County and oversaw the Labor & Employment Division, a team of 17 lawyers responsible for advice and counsel for human resources professionals including performance management, labor relations, employee relations, hiring practices, employee classification issues, employment contracts, family and medical leaves, accommodations, terminations, and reductions in force.

She will co-chair CWL’s In-House Counsel Network this year and also is serving on the Communications Committee.

She has served as a board member and past president of the Black Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles, Inc., and has served as a board member and past president of the California Association of Black Lawyers. She has served on the State Bar of California’s Council on Access and Fairness and as a commissioner on the Los Angeles County Human Rights Commission.

Granville completed her undergraduate work at Boston College and received her law degree at the University of Wisconsin Law School.



Carmela Pagay
District 7 Governor

Carmela Pagay is a partner with Levene, Neale, Bender, Yoo & Golubchik, LLP in Los Angeles, where she specializes in the representation of debtors, creditor committees, and Chapter 7 and Chapter 11 trustees, and bankruptcy litigation.

She will chair CWL’s Communications Committee, and she also is serving on the Annual Dinner and Annual Conference committees.

Pagay serves on the Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles Foundation Board of Governors, chairing its scholarship committee. She is a member of the Los Angeles County Bar Association’s President’s Advisory Committee on Women in the Legal Profession, and she is a longstanding member and a past chair of the Los Angeles Lawyer magazine’s editorial board. She also is active in the Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Los Angeles County.

Pagay received her Bachelor of Arts from the University of California, Los Angeles, and her Juris Doctor from Loyola Law School, Los Angeles.



Vaani Chawla
District 9 Governor

Vaani Chawla is an immigration lawyer who founded Chawla Law Group, APC, and recently joined with another attorney to create Berner Chawla PLLC in San Diego. Chawla has spent nearly 30 years representing businesses, families, and individuals in a wide range of business and family immigration matters, including petitions filed under the Violence Against Women Act.

She is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) and is a former treasurer for the San Diego AILA Chapter. She has participated in legislative advocacy efforts in Washington D.C. to preserve the rights of immigrants. As president of the South Asian Bar Association of San Diego in 2019, Chawla led the organization’s first effort to educate San Diegans about hate crimes targeting South Asian Sikh Americans.

Chawl is serving on CWL’s Awards Committee, Diversity, Equity, Belonging & Inclusion Committee, and Judicial Committee.

She is also a member of the board of Women of Color in the Law and is a founding member of the San Diego Unity Bar. She is a past board member of Lawyers Club of San Diego, where she served as vice president of policy and membership, and co-chaired the Equality and Action Committee, the Advocacy and Reproductive Justice Committee, and the Annual Dinner Committee. She also was actively involved in the Diverse Women’s Committee.

Chawla earned her Juris Doctor degree from Boston College Law School and her B.A. from the University of Arizona.



2024 CWL Board Of Governors

CWL’s Board of Governors is comprised of district governors representing nine geographical districts, affiliate governors representing sister bar associations from throughout the state, two at-large governors, and two non-voting judicial liaisons.

District governors are elected by CWL members in their districts to serve two-year terms, and affiliate governors are appointed or elected by their bar associations to serve one- or two-year terms. At-large governors and non-voting judicial liaisons are appointed by the CWL president each year to serve one-year terms.

DISTRICT GOVERNORS

District 1

(Butte, Colusa, Del Norte, Glenn, Humboldt, Lake, Lassen, Mendocino, Modoc, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, and Yuba counties)

Amelia Burroughs – Burroughs Legal

District 2

(Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Napa, Sacramento, Solano, Sonoma, Tuolumne, and Yolo counties)

Jennifer Hartman King – Hartman King PC

District 3

(Alameda, Contra Costa, San Mateo and Santa Clara counties)

Pa’tanisha Davis Pierson – Key Counsel PC

Julie Woods – Los Angeles County Superior Court

District 4

(San Francisco and Marin counties)

Hon. Lynn O’Malley Taylor (ret.) – JAMS

Jessica Stender – Equal Rights Advocates

District 5

(Fresno, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Mono, Monterey, San Benito, San Joaquin, Santa Cruz, Stanislaus and Tulare counties)

Melissa Marsh – Fresno County District Attorney’s Office

District 6

(Santa Barbara, Ventura, San Luis Obispo, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties)

Terri Hilliard Olson – Terri Hilliard PC

District 7

(Los Angeles County)

Michele Anderson – Los Angeles City Attorney’s Office

Uche W. Anene – AT&T

Lorrina Duffy – QDRO Experts

Camille Townsend Granville – Airbnb

Carmela Pagay – Levene Neale Bender Yoo Golubchik, LLP

District 8

(Orange County)

Betty Fracisco – Garrett & Jensen

District 9

(Imperial and San Diego counties)

Vaani Chawla – Berner Chawla, PLLC

Tristan Higgins – Metaclusive, LLC

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AT-LARGE GOVERNORS

Beverly Brand – California Department of Insurance

Michelle Philo – Philo Law Firm, PC

AFFILIATE GOVERNORS

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Fresno County Women Lawyers Association
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Women Lawyers of Sacramento
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Women Lawyers of Ventura County
Monique Fierro – Myers, Widders, Gibson, Jones & Feingold,
LLP

GET INVOLVED – JOIN A CWL COMMITTEE

California Women Lawyers counts on you, our creative and energetic members, to help us put on inspiring programs, advocate for issues that matter to you, recognize the best and brightest lawyers and judges, help women on their paths to the bench, support students working toward careers in law, and more.

Read about our many committees below and contact us at info@cwll.org to get involved!

AMICUS COMMITTEE

The Amicus Committee evaluates whether CWL should file or join amicus briefs based on CWL’s priorities and mission. The committee evaluates amicus briefs drafted by our partner organizations, such as the National Women’s Law Center, and makes recommendations to the Board for approval. The committee also identifies cases in which CWL may wish to draft its own amicus briefs, recommends such cases to the Board, coordinates retention of pro bono counsel to draft amicus briefs, works closely with counsel on case strategy, and reviews the briefs prior to filing.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

The Annual Conference Committee plans CWL’s annual conference featuring a full day of programming and speakers. The committee develops a conference theme and sets a schedule of workshops, panel discussions, and other programming designed to uplift, educate, and inspire our members. The committee works within its budget to secure a venue and catering, solicits conference sponsors, and works closely with staff to develop marketing materials, manage registration, and coordinate logistics for the event.

ANNUAL DINNER COMMITTEE

The Annual Dinner Committee plans CWL’s annual dinner, which traditionally marks the transition of Board leadership and includes recognition of CWL award winners and scholarship recipients. The committee selects the annual dinner theme, secures a top-notch keynote speaker, and coordinates a silent auction benefiting the CWL Foundation. The committee works within its budget to secure a venue and catering, solicits sponsors, and works closely with staff to develop marketing materials, manage registration, and coordinate logistics for the event.

AWARDS COMMITTEE

The Awards Committee manages the nomination and selection process for CWL’s four annual awards: the Fay Stender Award, the Judith Soley Lawyer as Citizen Award, the Rose Bird Memorial Award, and the Joan Dempsey Klein Distinguished Jurist Award. The committee is responsible for soliciting nominations for each award, selecting prospective recipients who most closely fit the spirit and legacy of the award’s namesake and what the award is meant to honor, presenting selected prospective recipients to the Board for discussion and vote, and coordinating with the successful nominating individuals or organizations to plan events honoring the award winners.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The primary role of the Communications Committee is to provide members and the community with transparent communications such as news, information, resources, program details, and other CWL updates consistent with CWL’s mission and goals, in a timely and efficient manner. The committee publishes CWL’s quarterly digital newsletter and maintains CWL’s website and social media platforms, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and other sites.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION & BELONGING COMMITTEE

The Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee works to increase and celebrate diversity in CWL’s programming and membership, and to promote the use of diverse speakers. The committee also coordinates the annual So, You Want to Be a Lawyer program, aimed at high school, college, and law students interested in potential legal careers.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Education Committee plans and organizes educational programs and webinars on issues of interest to CWL members presented via Zoom throughout the year. The Committee aims to present three to four CLE programs each year.

ELECT TO RUN COMMITTEE

The Elect to Run Committee coordinates CWL’s Elect to Run program, which features speakers and workshops providing the inspiration and the practical information needed to run for office. CWL developed Elect to Run, which received the 2016 Outstanding Member Program Award from the National Conference of Women’s Bar Associations, in an effort to increase the numbers of women in elected office.

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GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The Governance Committee is a standing committee that provides guidance to the Board regarding the requirements of the governing documents of CWL, the California Corporations Code for nonprofit corporations, and Robert’s Rules of Order. The committee reviews CWL committee charters for compliance with requirements, considers questions from Board members regarding the appropriate process to address issues as they arise, and provides periodic review and recommended updates to the CWL bylaws.

IN-HOUSE COUNSEL NETWORK

The In-House Counsel Network Committee manages CWL’s special network of in-house counsel from across the state and various industries, partnering on an agenda that advances women in law and business. The committee coordinates programming for IHCN members; identifies, attracts, and vets potential members; and maintains the IHCN listserv.

JUDICIAL COMMITTEE

The Judicial Committee includes a subcommittee that focuses on judicial evaluations and a subcommittee that coordinates CWL’s annual So, You Want to Be a Judge program.

The Judicial Evaluations Committee advocates for a diverse and qualified state and federal bench by preparing thorough and unbiased evaluations of judicial candidates upon request. The committee conducts a thorough vetting process – reviewing each candidate’s application, writing samples and questionnaires; soliciting and reviewing confidential questionnaires from lists provided by the candidate and generated by the committee; and interviewing individuals familiar with each candidate. The committee prepares detailed written reports and recommends candidate ratings via presentation to the Board in a confidential session, then communicates the rating to the candidate and in a detailed letter to the governor’s judicial appointments secretary.

The Judicial Program Committee organizes the So, You Want to Be a Judge program, bringing together speakers who can provide inside information about the path to the bench – such as the governor’s judicial appointments secretary and staff, members of the Commission on Judicial Nominees Evaluation (JNE), members of judicial appointments committees for California’s senators, and sitting judges.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

The Legislative Committee is the cornerstone of CWL’s legislative priorities and advocacy efforts. The committee reviews and researches proposed legislation each year, evaluating the bills’ significance and relevance to CWL’s mission and compiling a legislative advocacy agenda for CWL Board approval. The committee monitors proposed bills at the state and federal levels, tracks their progress, and engages in advocacy for CWL’s legislative agenda.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

The Membership Committee works to recruit and retain active CWL members and increase diversity of the membership. The committee coordinates outreach to determine membership needs, communicates with non-renewing members, and develops membership drives. The committee also develops initiatives to balance membership in legal industry sectors and organizes member programs.

SPONSORSHIP COMMITTEE

The Sponsorship Committee works with Board members to develop leads for sponsorship of CWL’s annual conference, annual dinner, awards receptions, and other programming. The committee develops packages that fit the needs of sponsors at every level for each program, contacts potential sponsors, helps them find the right level of sponsorship, and works to ensure that each sponsor is recognized and appreciated through CWL’s marketing materials and at each program.

The Troubled-Teen Industry Addressing Legal Challenges in Youth Residential Treatment Programs

BY AMANDA SIMMONS

The American Bar Association adopted Resolution 605 at the 2023 Annual Meeting in August 2023. This important resolution provides support for the Stop Institutional Child Abuse Act and similar state, local and federal legislation that aims to prevent child abuse in youth residential treatment programs.

Resolution 605 was developed by the Commission of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) and the Section of Civil Rights and Social Justice, as part of a collaborative multi-year effort led by Skip Harsch, director of the SOGI Commission. This Commission has taken the lead on the project due, in part, to previous research that has clearly identified that children of color and LGBTQ youth have a much higher likelihood of ending up in residential treatment than their peers.

The report accompanying the resolution detailed a number of challenges facing policy makers and legislators, including inconsistent data collection at both the state and federal level, confusion over choice of law and jurisdiction, and inability to monitor and enforce consistent standards. In addition to these broad policy challenges, practitioners should be aware of a number of common legal issues facing youth placed in youth treatment programs.

WHAT IS THE TROUBLED TEEN INDUSTRY?

Policy makers have struggled to effectively regulate this industry, often referred to as the Troubled Teen Industry, for decades. This catch-all term may refer to wilderness therapy, residential treatment facilities, psychiatric programs, special education schools, congregate care centers, and therapeutic boarding schools. Each year, as many as 200,000 children may be placed in these settings through the juvenile justice system, child welfare agencies, school districts, insurance providers and parents. With origins in the almshouses, workhouses, convict farms, correctional institutions, asylums and hospitals of the 1800s, modern day youth treatment programs have evolved from centuries of locking up the disabled or unfit and removing them from the daily interactions of community life by confining them to a cell.

The legal community has wrestled with the issue of child abuse in residential facilities since at least the 1970s, with one Senate report describing the harsh behavior modifications commonly used in youth treatment programs as similar to the brainwashing techniques employed by the North Koreans during the Korean War. Credible research has documented serious maltreatment in youth residential programs, including sexual assault, physical and medical neglect, and bodily assault resulting in civil rights violations, hospitalization, or death. Numerous government investigations of the \$23 billion industry have followed, but meaningful change has proven elusive.

COMMON LEGAL ISSUES WITH YOUTH TREATMENT PROGRAMS

Despite the duration and magnitude of the issue, many lawyers and judges remain unaware of how youth treatment programs may impact their clients and cases. Below are five common legal issues that may arise when working with clients impacted by youth treatment programs.

- 1. **Educational Abuse:** California Education Code 56365 allows for placement of special education students in out-of-state, nonpublic, nonsectarian schools if the school district is not able to provide a Free and Appropriate Public Education to the student. The out-of-state school should administer the student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) and coordinate with the local school district to ensure that the student is meeting the appropriate benchmarks. However, it is difficult to monitor students’ progress, and students with some of the highest educational requirements may end up receiving little or no education at all.
- 2. **Civil Rights Violations:** In addition to the racial and social justice issues and disparate effect upon minority and LGBTQ communities, individuals with disabilities are also heavily impacted by overuse of residential programs. In *Olmstead v L.C.*, 527 U.S. 581 (1999), the Supreme Court held that the unjustified segregation of individuals

with disabilities violates Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Despite this landmark case, the goal of the integration mandate in Title II remains largely unmet, and lawsuits throughout the country are claiming that children with mental health challenges are experiencing a revolving door of institutionalization.

3. **Child Trafficking:** Government agencies are recognizing the increased prevalence of sex trafficking within the child welfare system and juvenile justice systems. With AB 153 (2021), California ended the use of out-of-state facilities by child welfare and the juvenile justice system, requiring that all children placed in out-of-state residential facilities be returned to the state. While legislation like this might help to curb sex trafficking amongst vulnerable California children, the legal community must continue to take action and prevent the sexual exploitation of youth placed in residential treatment facilities.
4. **Deceptive marketing and fraudulent business practices:** Advocacy organizations have voiced concern over deceptive marketing practices in teen treatment facilities for over a decade. These practices can include sales bonuses and undisclosed financial relationships, misrepresentation of staff qualifications, and efforts to hide past child abuse or financial mismanagement. California may permit delayed discovery rules allowing for fraud claims to be pursued after the three-year statute of limitations under Section 338(d) of the California Code of Civil Procedure. Thus, attorneys in California wishing to pursue litigation against harmful facilities should consider including claims of fraud, where appropriate, which has proven to be a successful litigation tactic in other cases nationwide.
5. **Injuries, sexual assault, and wrongful death:** Tort liability provides a powerful and long-term deterrent to systemic, abusive practices. Inconsistent reporting standards obfuscate an accurate understanding of the prevalence of abuse within residential treatment centers. Despite the lack of clear definitions and reporting, injuries from overuse of restraints are extremely common in youth treatment programs. Likewise, sexual assault is a pervasive issue, leaving lifetime consequences for victims. Wrongful death claims are unfortunately common as well due to negligence and medical neglect. Youth experiencing

these types of injuries are often not believed by the legal system and mistreated by law enforcement when trying to report concerns, often due to bias against mental health issues and institutionalization. Lawyers handling these cases need to be trauma-informed and able to handle civil claims without creating additional challenges and re-traumatization for victims.

HOW CAN THE LEGAL COMMUNITY GET INVOLVED TO SUPPORT EFFECTIVE CHANGE?

Meaningful change is nuanced and will take time and coordinated effort at both the federal, state, and local levels to ensure the safety of vulnerable youth in treatment facilities. Ongoing efforts must be made to educate lawyers and the judiciary, both in California and nationwide, to ensure that individuals who represent and decide cases impacting vulnerable children are equipped with adequate knowledge and resources regarding this issue.

Below are three suggestions to effectuate change at the federal, state, and local levels:

Support the Stop Institutional Child Abuse Act

The Stop Institutional Child Abuse Act is a bipartisan, bicameral, federal bill that was introduced to Congress on April 27, 2023. This crucial legislation is a response to pervasive child abuse and neglect in the “Troubled Teen Industry” and youth residential treatment programs across the nation. The Act envisions a more accountable, transparent, and efficient system for safeguarding the health, safety, and well-being of youth in residential care. It aims to accomplish this by improving national data collection and reporting, establishing a Federal Work Group to disseminate best practices, promoting professional training in the fields of child protection, and advancing community-based alternatives to youth residential programs. For more information visit www.stopinstitutionalchildabuse.com.

Advocate for California laws that protect youth

California lawyers can, and should, take a national leadership role in ensuring that all youth within our state are protected from child abuse and exploitation. State regulations and laws can more closely monitor the health, safety, and welfare of all youth within the state than federal regulation. California has already taken a strong stance with AB 153, but additional work is needed to reduce the out-of-state placement of children through school districts. With skyrocketing rates of adolescent

mental health issues, California must continue to invest in viable solutions for children experiencing mental health crisis.

Develop and support local solutions and community investments

Local, community-based change is a huge component of meaningful change for youth in treatment programs. Cities such as Philadelphia have taken a lead by creating Youth Ombudsman positions. Local government leaders should support the development of comprehensive community-based

health care solutions and child welfare initiatives that seek to keep children with family. Local bar associations can educate their members on these issues. And lawyers and judges can ensure that they are well-versed on the issue when facing it in their practices and courtrooms.



Amanda Simmons is the founder of Ambika Law, PC, a Corona Del Mar firm dedicated to special education, children’s rights and institutional child abuse.



Make Time for Real Self-Care

BY PAULINE VILLANUEVA

If you’re reading this, stop.

Pause.

Close your eyes.

Take a deep breath in, and lift your shoulders up to your ears. As you exhale, let your shoulders relax down your back. Keeping your eyes closed, repeat this two or three times (or as many times as you’d like).

Now open your eyes.

The fall and holiday season is a busy time for a lot of us in the legal community. In six weeks alone, I counted at least three conferences, three dinners, and three galas – and that’s just what I know of in Southern California. This is to say nothing of other conferences and dinners occurring in other parts of

California and the rest of the country we may need to attend, plus any Halloween events we may have celebrated with family and friends. Galas, dinners, and conferences continued through November, then we got to the holidays, and before you know it, the new year starts.

Whew!

If you’re like me, you’re tired just reading that, let alone going through it. For many of us, it has been a busy few months. It can be really easy to get overwhelmed or even just caught up in everything that’s happening in the legal community, without even touching on what’s going on in our personal lives. And of course, with everything going on in our country and in the world, we may experience even more stress and anxiety. When all that happens, it can also be easy to forget about self-care – real self-care, not just what we think of as “self-care.”

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I've been thinking a lot about something I saw recently about the seven types of rest people need. (Full disclosure: I saw it on Instagram, but it's something you can Google and read about.) Beyond just physical and mental rest, we may need the following:

- 1. **Social rest** – taking a break from socializing, spending more time with people who nourish and inspire you, or even spending time alone if it feels safe;
- 2. **Creative rest** – reading or watching something inspiring or uplifting, letting go of the pressure to create, or taking walks in nature;
- 3. **Sensory rest** – limiting time on electronic devices (I know, this one's hard for us), taking time off social media, turning down bright lights or loud sounds, or using aromatherapy;
- 4. **Spiritual rest** – meditating or praying, volunteering, or otherwise finding that connection to our purpose in life and in our community; and
- 5. **Emotional rest** – journaling, having a heart-to-heart with a trusted friend or family member, or setting boundaries.

As we go through “gala season” and the holidays, it's more important than ever to check in with ourselves to see what we need in terms of self-care and rest. It's easy to fall into what I think of as the “self-care trap” – doing self-care things for the sake of doing self-care things, without really stopping to think about what your body and mind need. This is especially true as we get busy, as we get stressed, as we get overwhelmed. Things like exercise and eating well start feeling like obligations and just more things to check off your to-do list. Suddenly, they're chores, not things that actually make you feel better. And you might not realize it right away.

So, stop. Pause. Take a deep breath. Allow yourself a few seconds, maybe even a few minutes, to sit and think about what you need right now – physically, mentally, and emotionally. Do you need to take a day off from going to the gym or even yoga, to let your body rest and recover? Maybe you need to eat something, even if it's leftover candy from Halloween or holiday cookies. Maybe you realize you're doomscrolling and you need to put your phone down and sit outside for five minutes. Maybe you're like me and you realize your social battery has

been completely run down, so you need to say no to that dinner or holiday party. Maybe it's none of these things or all of these things.

When things get busy and threaten to overwhelm you, try not to fall into the trap of doing “self-care” things for the sake of “doing self-care things.” Instead, let this be a friendly reminder that you can always check in with yourself and recalibrate what taking care of yourself really means to you right now, at this moment.

Give yourself permission to do the things that make you feel refreshed and rejuvenated, even if it's just closing your eyes and breathing.



Pauline Villanueva is a staff attorney with Appellate Defenders in San Diego. She is a member of the Wellness Subcommittee of the San Diego County Bar Association's Programs and Education Committee.

CWL Engages Judicial Award Winners “In Conversation”

BY ABBY PUTZULU

CWL hosted two events celebrating its 2023 judicial award recipients in the late summer and fall.

The online “In Conversation With” programs honored Santa Clara County Superior Court Judge Erica Yew, the winner of the 2023 Rose Bird Memorial Award, and Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Michelle Williams Court, the winner of the 2023 Joan Dempsey Klein Distinguished Jurist Award.



CWL hosted “In Conversation with Judge Erica R. Yew” Aug. 28, with Yew and Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Holly Fujie discussing Yew's experiences as an attorney and her 20-plus years on bench.

Yew spoke about the importance of being visible and involved, talking about how she felt a great responsibility to inspire others to go into law or to help others. She said her childhood experiences defined her and led her to commit to public service.

As the first Asian-American woman on the Santa Clara County Superior Court bench, Yew said she believed it was important to be involved in the community early in her tenure on the bench.

“I'm the only Asian woman here,” she said. “If I don't go out into the community and attend these events, no one else is.”

When asked about advice she gives to others, Yew stressed the importance of being in the moment – “Pick the thing that you're going to be at and be present.”

Yew has lived that advice. She currently serves as president of the California Judges Association, and she has held leadership roles in the Judicial Council of California, the California Commission on Judicial Performance, the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association Judicial Council, and the California Asian Pacific American Judges Association. She

serves on the California Supreme Court's Committee on Judicial Ethics Opinions and co-chairs the California Judicial Mentor Program, as well as serving on the California Access to Justice Commission and the board of the National Center for State Courts.

The Rose Bird Memorial Award recognizes a Northern California judge whose judicial excellence and longstanding or groundbreaking public service inspires women lawyers throughout the state.



CWL hosted “In Conversation with Judge Michelle Williams Court” Oct. 17, with Court and Los Angeles Superior Court Presiding Judge Samantha Jessner discussing Court's legal and judicial career.

Court is the Presiding Judge of the Los Angeles Superior Court Civil Division. She is the current chair of the Los Angeles Superior Court Technology Committee and is vice president of the Los Angeles Law Library Board of Trustees. She has served on the Los Angeles Superior Court's Executive Committee, as an advisor to the California Courts Judicial Council, as a member of the Commission on the Future of California's Court System, the Civil and Small Claims Advisory Committee, the Language Access Implementation Plan Taskforce, the Probate Conservatorship Taskforce, and the Technology Tactical Plan Update Workstream.

Court has been recognized for her service with, among other awards, the California Association of Black Lawyers Judicial Award of Excellence and the Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles Distinguished Service Award.

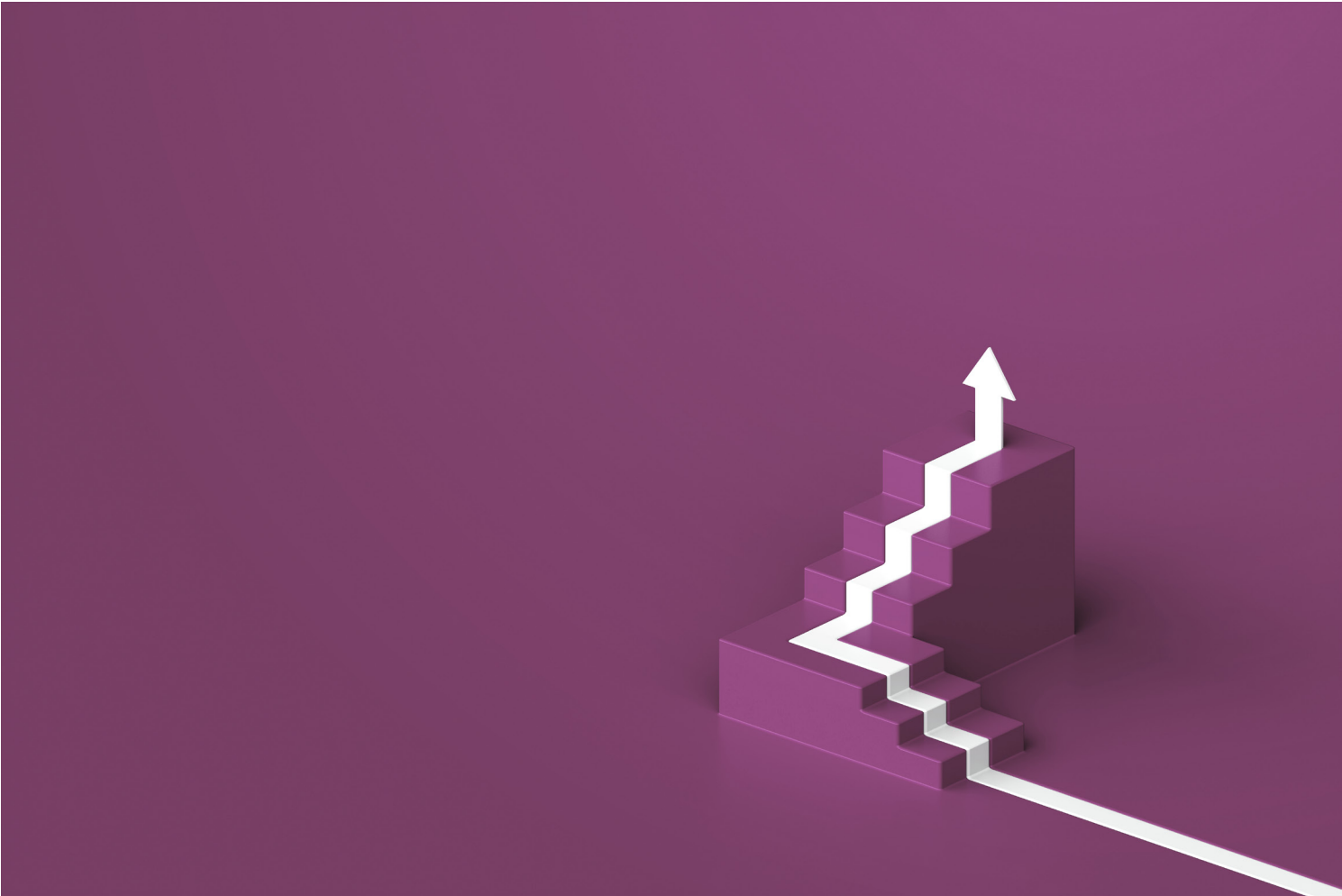
The Joan Dempsey Klein Award recognizes a Southern California judge for excellence as a jurist, longstanding vigorous service, and inspiration to the women lawyers of California.

Tracy Hughes, CWL’s 2023 First Vice President and chair of CWL’s Awards Committee, said the “In Conversation With” programs allowed an opportunity to hear from inspiring women judges in an intimate format.

“It is so empowering to see such accomplished and kind women on the bench,” Hughes said. “It is always exhilarating to hear stories of inspirational women.”



Abby Putzulu is a CWL Affiliate Governor for Women Lawyers of Alameda County and an associate in Fisher Phillips’ San Francisco office.



CWL Preps Future Attorneys with So, You Want to Be a Lawyer Program

BY PA'TANISHA DAVIS PIERSON

CWL hosted its annual So, You Want to Be a Lawyer program Oct. 7, a comprehensive two-hour virtual workshop for high school, college, and law students.

The workshop, which focuses on helping students at different education levels learn about the paths to becoming lawyers and entering the legal profession, was organized by CWL’s Diversity, Equity, Belonging and Inclusion Committee, chaired by 2024 president-elect Pa’tanisha Davis Pierson. The program aims to increase diversity in the legal profession for future generations by encouraging youth to pursue and continue higher education toward a legal career, and the program seeks to motivate students interested in a legal career and to provide them with resources and support.

Some 84 people attended the program, which was kicked off by a warm welcome from CWL 2023 president Mika Domingo, who reminded participants that there is potentially unlimited power of the mind when we set our intentions to set our goals in motion.

Los Angeles City Attorney Hydee Feldstein Soto was the keynote speaker, and she shared her story of being born and raised in Puerto Rico, attending Columbia Law School, and the career path that led her to the City Attorney’s Office. She encouraged the students to pursue legal careers and noted that she has found her law degree to be valuable in various aspects of her life.

Soto also encouraged the students to accept help where it’s offered.

“None of us succeed on our own,” Soto said. “We all need help along the way. We all stand on the shoulders of those who came before us.”

The keynote speech was followed by breakout sessions for high school, college, and law students.

CWL board member Trina Saunders moderated the high school panel, which included Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Debra Cole and Shaun Dabby Jacobs, supervisor of the Civil Appellate

Division in the Los Angeles City Attorney’s Office.

CWL board member Lorrina Duffy moderated the college panel, which included CWL president Mika Domingo, CWL board member Monique Fierro, and Michael Pierson, a partner at Key Counsel PC in Antioch.

CWL board member Michele Anderson, who co-chairs the Diversity, Equity, Belonging and Inclusion Committee, moderated the law school panel, which included Ariel Brownell Lee, a family law practitioner in Walnut Creek, and Karen Luong, a partner at Husch Blackwell in Los Angeles.

Panelists shared information about their journeys to becoming lawyers, study tips for law school and the bar exam, and how to choose a college, undergraduate major, and law school.

The program concluded with a presentation by Pierson on “Landing the Job/Internship of Your Dreams,” which included tips on how to choose jobs and internship opportunities, making contact with employers, application and resume writing tips, interview etiquette, and social media and artificial intelligence do’s and don’ts.

CWL thanks the program’s Silver Sponsor Hanna Brophy and Ally Sponsors California ChangeLawyers, Filipino American Lawyers of San Diego, Orange County Women Lawyers, and Asian American Bar Association of the Greater Bay Area. CWL also thanks Hudson & Luros LLP for assistance in trademarking So, You Want to Be a Lawyer.



Pa’tanisha Davis Pierson is the 2024 CWL president-elect and a partner with Key Counsel PC in Antioch.

In-House Counsel Network Hosts Privacy Law Panel and Networking Event

BY NATALIE GARCIA LASHINSKY

CWL’s In-House Counsel Network (IHCN) presented a Privacy Law Panel and Statewide Networking Event Oct. 25. The hybrid event featured in-person attendance options in the San Francisco Bay area at the Philippine Center and in Los Angeles at Microsoft’s Event Facilities, as well as a virtual option.

Former IHCN co-chair Latrice A.G. Byrdsong was present in Los Angeles to welcome the panel, which included Rachel Nico, Global Legal Director-Privacy and Cybersecurity and Group Counsel-Information Technology for Intel Corporation; Linna Hsui, Senior Privacy Counsel for Snowflake, Inc.; Kimberly Carter, partner with Epstein Becker & Green PC in Los Angeles; and Becca Wahlquist, a partner with Kelley Drye & Warren LLP in Los Angeles.

This powerhouse panel shared riveting information on the latest state and federal privacy laws impacting law firms, businesses and organizations, demonstrating with current events and real-life cases just how relevant this area is to many areas of the legal profession.

Attendees represented companies including Google, Microsoft and Airbnb, Inc., and were able to network before and after the CLE presentation at the respective in-person locations in LA and San Francisco.

CWL thanks our generous sponsor, Kelley Drye & Warren LLP, for the wonderful cuisine and wine at each event location.

Stay tuned for future IHCN events, including our IHCN Power Lunches.

If you are interested in joining IHCN or organizing an IHCN Power Lunch, please contact IHCN co-chairs Uche Anene at uanene.cwldistrict7@gmail.com or Camille Townsend Granville at camille.granville@airbnb.com



Natalie Garcia Lashinsky is a 2023 CWL governor at large and a partner at Husch Blackwell in Oakland.



CWL Joins Amicus Brief in Reproductive Rights Case at Supreme Court

BY JODI CLEESATTLE

California Women Lawyers joined a Supreme Court brief supporting reproductive rights in January in the litigation challenging federal approval of the drug mifepristone, which was approved for use in facilitating abortions by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in 2000.

CWL also joined an amicus brief in the Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals in October, supporting a challenge to Arizona’s ban on transgender girls playing school sports.

FDA v. Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine Danco Laboratories, LLC v. Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine

CWL joined 236 reproductive health, rights and justice organizations in an amicus **brief** filed Jan. 30 in the U.S. Supreme Court in the consolidated cases, *FDA v. Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine and Danco Laboratories, LLC v. Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine*, Case Nos. 23-235 and 23-236. The brief was coordinated by the National Women’s Law Center, American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Center for Reproductive Rights, and Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

CWL previously joined two earlier briefs in the litigation, arguing in support of the federal approval of mifepristone.

The litigation began when the plaintiffs, a group of doctors and medical groups opposed to abortion, filed suit in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas in November 2022, arguing that mifepristone is unsafe and should not have been approved by the FDA in 2000. Mifepristone, which is commonly used in the United States in conjunction with the drug misoprostol, is used in more than half of all abortions obtained in the United States.

On April 7, 2023, the federal district court granted a preliminary injunction against the use of mifepristone, barring the use of the drug nationwide, finding that the plaintiffs were likely to show that the FDA improperly approved the drug and later improperly loosened restrictions on its use. The FDA filed an emergency request for a stay of that ruling in the Fifth Circuit, which was partially granted. The FDA also filed an emergency application

for a stay with the Supreme Court, which was granted April 21, 2023.

CWL joined an amicus brief in support of the emergency application filed in the Supreme Court and later filed an amicus brief in support of the FDA’s position on the merits in the Fifth Circuit.

The Fifth Circuit ruled August 16, 2023 (*Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine v. Food and Drug Administration*, 78 F.4th 210 (5th Cir. 2023)), vacating the district court’s stay of the 2000 FDA approval of mifepristone and the 2019 approval of a generic version of the drug, but affirming the district court’s ruling rejecting the FDA’s 2016 and 2021 actions that had loosened restrictions on the use of mifepristone, such as increasing the maximum gestational age for use from seven weeks to ten weeks, allowing telehealth visits, and allowing medical professionals who are not physicians to prescribe the drug.

The FDA and Danco, which manufactures mifepristone, filed petitions for writ of certiorari, which the Supreme Court granted in December 2023.

In the Jan. 30 brief, amici explained that mifepristone is safe, effective, widely used, and has been critical to filling the gaps in abortion care for the most underserved communities. The brief also debunked false assertions about mifepristone and explained how suspending the FDA’s current approval status of the drug would have immediate and severe consequences to the administrative process.

The cases are set for oral argument March 26.

Doe v. Horne

CWL joined a **brief** filed Oct. 13 in the Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals in *Helen Doe v. Thomas Horne*, Case No. 23-16030. The brief, filed by the National Women’s Law Center (NWLC), was filed in support of two middle school and high school students who challenged Arizona’s law seeking to ban them from playing school sports because they are transgender

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girls. The U.S. District Court enjoined the anti-trans sports ban, finding that it likely violates Title IX and the Equal Protection Clause, especially given controlling Ninth Circuit precedent in *Hecox v. Little*, 79 F.4th 1009 (9th Cir. 2023) (striking down Idaho’s illegal ban targeting trans girls and women) and the Supreme Court’s decision in *Bostock v. Clayton County*, 590 U.S. 644 (2020). The State of Arizona, along with two private defendant-appellants, appealed the preliminary injunction.

The amicus brief highlighted how school policies fostering safety and inclusion for LGBTQ+ youth, especially transgender and nonbinary students, are both consistent with Title IX and a key aspect of creating gender equity in education. The brief also noted that access to school sports is an important part of education for all students, associated with lifelong academic, social, and health benefits. Amici argued that rules scrutinizing whether girls are “feminine enough” perpetuate sexist and racist stereotypes that harm all girls and women, especially Black and brown girls and women.

The case is set for oral argument March 14.

Amicus Wins

The Ninth Circuit and Fifth Circuit issued favorable rulings in August 2023 in two cases in which CWL had joined amicus briefs.

In *Hecox v. Little*, 79 F.4th 1009 (9th Cir. 2023) the Ninth Circuit affirmed the district court’s order preliminarily enjoining Idaho’s Fairness in Women’s Sports Act, which bans transgender and intersex women and girls from participating in sports consistent with their gender identity. In its August 17, 2023, opinion, the Ninth Circuit held that the district court did not abuse its discretion in finding that plaintiffs were likely to succeed on the merits of their claim that the Act violates the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

The Ninth Circuit had previously issued an order in June 2021 remanding the case to the district court for the limited purpose of determining whether the plaintiff’s claim was moot in light of her changed enrollment status at Boise State University. CWL had joined an amicus brief filed in the case December 21, 2020.

In *Hamilton v. Dallas County*, 79 F.4th 494 (5th Cir. 2023), the Fifth Circuit, sitting *en banc*, held that plaintiffs bringing

employment claims under Title VII are no longer required to establish adverse employment actions that constitute “ultimate employment decisions.” The case, in which CWL had joined an amicus brief filed May 21, 2021, involved a suit filed by female detention service officers at the Dallas County Jail, who were subjected to a facially discriminatory scheduling policy that allowed male officers to take off both weekend days but limited female officers to weekdays or a single weekend day off, on the grounds that more male officers were needed during weekdays for safety reasons.

A Fifth Circuit three-judge panel initially held on August 3, 2022, that, while the schedule policy was overtly gender-based, the plaintiffs’ case was properly dismissed because they had not suffered an adverse employment action within the meaning of binding Fifth Circuit precedent, which held that only “ultimate employment decisions” such as hiring and firing constitute adverse employment actions. The panel had invited *en banc* review.

On August 18, 2023, the *en banc* court overruled the 2022 decision and eliminated the requirement that actionable claims of adverse employment decisions under Title VII must involve an “ultimate employment decision” such as hiring, firing, promotion, or pay. The court recognized that the text of Title VII contains no such limitation, and instead allows for liability for other discriminatory decisions. The court further ruled that an employee’s work schedules – which in this case, were restricted so women could not take full weekends off – are “quintessential” terms and conditions of employment.

Amicus Loss

In *Crisitello v. St. Theresa School*, 299 A.3d 781 (N.J. 2023), the New Jersey Supreme Court ruled in favor of a Catholic school that fired an unmarried elementary school art teacher after she became pregnant. The court, in an opinion issued August 14, 2023, held that the “religious tenets exception” to the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination provides an affirmative defense for religious employers facing claims of employment discrimination. This means that religious employers can use the exception as a way to avoid liability under state antidiscrimination law.

In this case, the school claimed Victoria Crisitello was fired because she violated its Code of Ethics, which follows Catholic

teachings on premarital sex. The New Jersey Supreme Court ruled for the school, holding that the teacher did not show a genuine dispute as to whether the school’s decision to fire her relied solely on religious tenets. Because the Court decided the case based on the New Jersey antidiscrimination statute, it did not rule on the arguments regarding the “ministerial exception” to workplace civil rights protections.

CWL had joined an amicus brief in support of the teacher August 4, 2021.

Copies of all amici briefs that CWL joins or files can be found on the CWL [website](#) shortly after they have been filed.

CWL considers opportunities to file or join amicus briefs in cases that support CWL’s mission of bettering the position of women in society, eliminating gender inequality, advancing women in the law, and improving the administration of justice. CWL also supports intersectionality and is committed to eliminating discrimination against people of color and LGBTQ+ individuals. CWL partners with organizations such as the National Women’s Law Center to evaluate opportunities to join amicus briefs.

If you would like to join CWL’s Amicus Committee, or you would like CWL to consider drafting or signing onto an amicus brief, please contact us at amicus@cwll.org.



Jodi Cleesattle is CWL’s president and a past chair of CWL’s Amicus Committee. She is Senior Assistant Attorney General for the California Department of Justice, leading the statewide Tort and Condemnation Section.





CWL Celebrates 2023 Legislative Accomplishments

BY JESSICA RAMEY STENDER

CWL advocated for important legislation in 2023, supporting critical bills aligned with CWL’s mission and legislative priorities, which include ensuring reproductive justice, including reproductive choice, maternity care, access to reproductive care, and protecting privacy; preventing violence against women and children, including domestic violence, human trafficking, gun violence and sex crimes; supporting human rights and equality; providing court funding and access to justice; and addressing economic issues.

CWL members met with legislative offices and submitted letters of support throughout the legislative session to set forth the importance and impact of our priority bills. We ended the 2023 legislative session with bold policy wins advancing the rights and economic security of women, families, and other communities throughout California.

CWL priority bills which were signed into law and budget wins this year include:

- AB 933: Protecting Survivors from Weaponized Defamation Lawsuits (Asm. Aguiar-Curry and Asm. Ward). This bill will ensure survivors of sexual harassment, assault, and discrimination have adequate protections against retaliatory, baseless defamation lawsuits which are increasingly being used as a weapon to threaten, silence, intimidate, and dissuade survivors from speaking out. AB 933 will help prevent these abusive legal tactics and ensure survivors have adequate relief when they prevail against meritless claims. See [here](#) for news coverage on this legislation.
- SB 521: CalWorks: Pregnancy or Parenting (Sen. Smallwood-Cuevas). This bill will help pregnant, parenting, and lactating students in high school and college to maintain their CalWORKs benefits and avoid penalties by adding destabilizing events and violations of Title IX protections to the lists of acceptable reasons for not meeting satisfactory progress requirements.

- SB 616: Paid Sick Days (Sen. Gonzalez). This bill will increase the minimum number of required paid sick days available to workers from 3 to 5 days. California law enables workers to use paid sick leave for the diagnosis, care, or treatment of their or a family member’s health condition; for preventive care for the worker or the worker’s family member; or to seek services related to domestic violence. Lack of access to adequate paid sick and safe days disproportionately impacts women. SB 616 will better ensure workers are not forced to choose between working while sick and being fired or sending a sick kid to school and not making rent. It will lead to a healthier, more productive workforce and give survivors of domestic violence more time to seek the protections they need.
- Child Care Budget Win: Child Care Family Fee and Provider Payment Reform (Asm. Gómez Reyes & Sen. Limón): Transformed the subsidized child care family fee system by eliminating fees for the majority of families and capping them at 1% for the rest. Additionally, this budget win establishes a new, more just way to pay child care providers based on the true cost of care, along with payment increases for two years. Please [click here](#) for more information about family fees and the impact this win will have on low-income families in California.

CWL will continue to support three 2023 priorities that were converted into two-year bills and will move forward in 2024:

- AB 793 – Stop Surveilling Our Bodies Act (Asm. Bonta): So-called “reverse demands” – also called “geofence demands” or “keyword demands” – are a form of unconstitutional digital surveillance that poses a grave risk in a post-Roe America. Reverse demands can compel companies to search their records for the identities of all people who looked up a particular keyword online or drove down a certain street. AB 793 will put a stop to unconstitutional reverse demands – preserving our digital privacy and protecting Californians’ right to live life on our own terms. California must be a true refuge for people seeking or providing abortions or gender-affirming care.

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- AB 518 – Paid Family Leave for Chosen Family (Asm. Wicks): This bill will provide a critical update to California’s Paid Family Leave (PFL) program to allow California workers to receive PFL wage replacement benefits when caring for a “designated person” who is a member of their chosen or extended family. This builds on AB 1041, a 2022 CWL priority bill passed in 2022 that gives workers the right to take paid sick days or unpaid job-protected family medical leave under the California Family Rights Act to care for a “designated person” who is a member of their chosen or extended family.
- AB 310 – Reimagining CalWORKS (Asm. Arambula): This bill would reimagine the CalWORKs (California Work, Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids) program by providing all parents with the critical support they need to ensure economic security for their children and themselves. AB 310 would undo historical harms of the CalWORKs program rooted in racist and sexist federal and state law and establish program changes that recognize the necessary steps needed to help CalWORKs families thrive.

While some of our priority bills did not succeed this year, we will continue to advocate for these important reforms:

- AB 524 – Family Caregiver Anti-Discrimination Act (Asm. Wicks): AB 524 would prohibit discrimination against employees based on their family caregiver status. In other words, the bill would prohibit employers from treating a worker adversely based on assumptions or stereotypes associated with their family caregiving. This type of discrimination affects employees of every income level, race, gender, and industry. Working mothers and pregnant people, though, are most likely to experience this type of discrimination, with low-wage earners and people of color disproportionately impacted. Four states and over 200 local jurisdictions have already enacted laws outlawing employment discrimination against parents and other caregivers. The legislature passed AB 524; however, it was ultimately vetoed by the Governor.
- AB 1128 – Young Child Tax Credit (YCTC) Expansion (Asm. Santiago): This bill would expand household eligibility for the Young Child Tax Credit (YCTC), a proven anti-poverty

tool, to match eligibility requirements for the California Earned Income Tax Credit. It would expand YCTC eligibility to include: children ages 6-18, children ages 19-23 who are students, and children of any age with permanent and total disabilities. This bill passed the policy committee votes in the Assembly, but was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

- SB 662 – Court Reporters (Sen. Rubio): This bill aims to address the crisis in our California superior courts caused by the shortage of Certified Shorthand Reporters (CSRs) available to create a record of court proceedings. This bill passed the policy committee votes in the Senate, but was held in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

The Legislative Committee welcomes CWL members to join this committee and encourages member input on the CWL legislative agenda. If you are interested in working with the Legislative Committee, there are plenty of opportunities to get involved as members write letters of support, attend hearings, provide testimony, and meet with legislators across the state. Please contact the Legislative Committee at jstender@equalrights.org.



Jessica Ramey Stender serves on the CWL Board of Governors as District 4 Governor and co-chairs CWL’s Legislative Committee. She is also Policy Director & Deputy Legal Director of Equal Rights Advocates, a gender justice organization.

Be Part of Something Bigger! Join CWL and Advance Your Legal Career

BY CLAIRE MELEHANI

California Women Lawyers (CWL) is not just an organization; it’s a vibrant community at the forefront of empowering and advancing women in the legal profession and society. Representing more than 70,000 women attorneys across the state, CWL stands as the only statewide voice for women lawyers and judges in California. Whether you’re a student, a new practitioner seeking to expand your client base, or an experienced attorney aiming to secure a position on the bench, CWL is your invaluable resource for professional growth and support.

Why Become a Member of California Women Lawyers?

Being a member of CWL is more than just joining an organization; it’s about becoming part of a supportive community that believes in your professional growth:

1. **Networking Opportunities:** CWL offers a range of networking events and opportunities for its members. Our Monthly Coffee and Connect virtual networking events provide you with a platform to connect with fellow legal professionals from all corners of the state. These 30-minute Zoom calls can be attended from your office, your couch, or even while you’re traveling, making it incredibly convenient to expand your professional network.
2. **Exclusive Access:** CWL’s “Author Series” is a unique feature that allows our members exclusive access to authors whose works align with our mission and members’ interests in the legal industry. These events, held both in-person and virtually, offer a deep dive into thought-provoking legal issues and discussions that can enrich your legal knowledge and insights.
3. **Celebrating Excellence:** CWL recognizes two judges and two attorneys each year with the Rose Bird Memorial Award, the Joan Dempsey Klein Distinguished Jurist Award, the Fay Stender Award, and the Judith Soley Lawyer as Citizen Award. Award winners are honored at in-person and virtual events, where members meet and interact with legal luminaries.

4. **Helping Women Get on the Bench:** CWL provides insider information at its annual So, You Want to Be a Judge program, which features speakers such as the state judicial appointments secretary, chair of the Commission on Judicial Nominees Evaluation, and chairs of the California senators’ judicial advisory committees. CWL also conducts comprehensive evaluations of judicial candidates.
5. **Professional Development:** Our Annual Conference is a full-day event that offers inspiration, education, and the opportunity to earn MCLE credits. This conference alternates annually between Northern and Southern California, making it accessible to our members from all corners of the state. Additionally, it includes a networking reception immediately following, providing you with the chance to connect with fellow professionals and further your career.
6. **Distinguished Speakers and Philanthropy:** CWL’s Annual Dinner is a must-attend event featuring prestigious keynote speakers and recognizing winners of CWL’s annual Nancy E. O’Malley Scholarship. The dinner kicks off with a silent auction, with proceeds benefiting the CWL Foundation, which supports our scholarships and philanthropic initiatives.

In addition to these events, CWL provides numerous other resources and opportunities for its members. We advocate for policies and issues that impact women in the legal profession, engage in mentorship, and offer leadership development programs.

By becoming a member of CWL, you are not just joining an organization; you are becoming part of a powerful movement dedicated to advancing women in the legal profession and society. Your membership helps us continue our mission and expand our reach, enabling us to create a more equitable and diverse legal community in California.

Don’t miss out on the chance to be part of something bigger. Join California Women Lawyers, connect with fellow legal professionals, and take your legal career to new heights.

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Together, we can make a difference, support each other, and create a brighter future for women in the legal profession.

Visit www.cwl.org today to become a member and experience the many benefits of being part of CWL.



Claire Melehani is a CWL affiliate governor for the Santa Clara County Bar Association Women Lawyers Section and a partner with McLellan Law Group, LLP in Silicon Valley.



CWL Upcoming Events

April 8 10:00am - 10:30am	Coffee and Connect <i>A CWL at Home Virtual Program</i>
April 18	<u>Rose Bird Memorial Award Reception</u> <i>Piedmont, CA</i>
May 13 10:00am - 10:30am	Coffee and Connect <i>A CWL at Home Virtual Program</i>
June 10 10:00am - 10:30am	Coffee and Connect <i>A CWL at Home Virtual Program</i>
July 8 10:00am - 10:30am	Coffee and Connect <i>A CWL at Home Virtual Program</i>
July 10 12:00pm	<u>So, You Want To Be A Governor?</u> <i>Zoom</i>
Aug 12 10:00am - 10:30am	Coffee and Connect <i>A CWL at Home Virtual Program</i>
Nov 8	<u>Annual Conference & Annual Dinner</u> <i>50th Anniversary Celebration</i>

BE PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER



**CALIFORNIA
WOMEN LAWYERS**

Join Now

CWL

was chartered in 1974 and is the only statewide organization dedicated to lifting up women in the law and in society. CWL's mission is “to advance women in the profession of law; to improve the administration of justice; to better the position of women in society; to eliminate all inequities based on gender and to provide an organization for collective action and expression germane to the aforesaid purposes.”

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

ONE-OF-A KIND PROGRAMMING

So You Want To Be A Judge: An insider guide demystifying – and preparing you for – the judicial application process.

Elect To Run: Encourages women to run for public office and provides tips on what it takes to run.

CWL At Home: Online series bringing resources, community and connection with opportunities for complimentary MCLE credits.

THE CWL NETWORK

CWL's membership includes lawyers, judges, in-house counsel, professors and law students, providing mentorship on a statewide basis. CWL provides various networking and speaker opportunities.

THE IN-HOUSE COUNSEL NETWORK

In-house lawyers from across the state and industries may connect through exclusive events, listserv, and programs designed specifically for women in house-counsel.

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY FOR WOMEN

Your membership supports CWL's state and national efforts to further legislation that makes life better for women.

AMICUS ACTIVITY

CWL prepares or joins in amicus briefs at the appellate level on matters relevant to CWL's core issues, including equal justice.

DIVERSITY ON THE BENCH

CWL works closely with the Governor's office to promote diversity in the judiciary, and endorses judges nationwide.

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

CWL has leadership opportunities available to enhance your network. Members are encouraged to join one of CWL's committees.

A NATIONAL VOICE

CWL is a conduit to national organizations, affiliates and sister bar organizations throughout the country.

\$175

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Each digital issue of the California Women Lawyer’s newsletter is shared with over 4,000 people across the U.S. This digital publication connects industry experts to relative legislation news, valuable events for networking and professional development as well as opinion editorials from CWL leaders and members. Space is limited, ad space is determined first come, first serve. All ads subject to approval by CWL.



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