



CALIFORNIA WOMEN LAWYERS  
NEWSLETTER

## Message from the CWL President Mika Domingo



### Dear Members and Friends,

Happy Women's Herstory Month! This year's national theme is "Celebrating Women Who Tell Our Stories." Let's celebrate the progress that CWL has made in the fight for gender equality, and reflect on the work that still needs to be done.

This month, CWL joins our sister bar organizations, Asian Pacific American Women Lawyers Alliance (APAWLA), Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles (WLALA), Latina Lawyers Bar Association (LLBA), LGBTQ+ Lawyers Association of Los Angeles, and the Black Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles in a fundraiser for reproductive rights. Our Judicial Evaluations Committee will host our signature "So, You Want to be a Judge Program," in our continuing efforts to increase diversity on the bench.

Next month, the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee will host an MCLE program in celebration of Diversity Month entitled "How Differences and Demeanor Affect Jury and Bench Verdicts."

Our Membership Committee is excited to launch CWL's Book Club, highlighting outstanding women authors. The first session will highlight, "Her Honor: Stories of Challenge and Triumph from Women Judges," edited by Lauren Stiller Rikkeen. One of our founding mothers, Drucilla Ramey, Chair Emerita of the Board of Directors of Equal Rights Advocates, is a contributing author. Ramey is a trailblazer and the epitome of a brilliant storyteller and fierce advocate.

Our Awards Committee announces CWL's 2023 honorees in this newsletter. We honor and celebrate these remarkable women who provide global impact, community leadership and inspiration to all of us.

I look forward to sharing stories with you. Please join me at the next Virtual "On The Menu" lunch program on March 28, 2023, as we honor the amazing women in our lives.

**Mika Domingo, President**

A handwritten signature of Mika Domingo in a cursive script.



# CWL WINTER 2023 NEWSLETTER

## 2023 CWL Board Officers

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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](http://www.cwl.org).

## Editor's Note

BY JODI CLEESATTLE

At first glance, this issue of CWL News might seem to be the bearer of bad news.



One article, "Losing Our [Best] Minds: Addressing the Attrition Crisis of Women Lawyers in a Post-Pandemic World," summarizes research from a 2021 study that found women leaving or contemplating leaving the legal profession at alarming rates.

Another article, "Equal Pay Day and the Gender Pay Gap," provides the unhappy news that women still have not achieved pay equity, earning only 82 cents to a man's dollar, based on raw data.

But we're optimists at California Women Lawyers. And we see the silver linings among the rain clouds.

The "Losing Our [Best] Minds" article, drafted as a joint project between CWL and the California Lawyers Association, serves as a call to action and provides concrete recommendations for retaining women lawyers, as well as tips for lawyers and law students seeking the right working environment for them. These recommendations and strategies are meant to be shared. Pass them along to your law firm or employer, along with your own creative ideas for improving attorney well-being.

The "Equal Pay Day" article highlights programs some CWL affiliates sponsor to call attention to the gender pay gap, and another article, "2023 is the Year of Pay Transparency," focuses on new legislation in California and other states that aims to narrow the pay gap by requiring salary transparency in job postings. Consider organizing an Equal Pay Day event or program for your local women's bar association, or write a letter or column for your local paper or bar publication raising awareness of the gender (and racial) pay gap.

When it feels like bad news is all around us, remember that we all can take action to make the world, or just our local communities, a little better. When the headlines make us feel like losing hope, don't give up. Delve into the issue that worries you, and find out what you can do. It may be writing an email or letter to a representative. It may be helping educate others through informal conversation or an MCLE-style program. It may be joining a group of like-minded people working to address the issue.

Whatever actions you take, big or small, celebrate them. Be a part of positive change, and be proud.

Jodi Cleesattle  
Co-Editor, CWL News



REGISTER NOW

**SO, YOU WANT TO BE A JUDGE?™**  
**MARCH 16, 2023 | 1-4PM**

VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

**SCHEDULE:**  
**MARCH 16, 2023**

- 1:00-2:00PM Appointments Panel
- 2:00-3:15PM Judicial Appointment Process
- 3:15-4:00PM What I'd Wish I'd Known Before Applying

This discussion of panelists shall consist of subject matter relevant to attorneys, including the judicial appointment and selection process. The Appointments Panel discussion is approved for Minimum Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) General Credit in the amount of 1.00 participatory hours.

**REGISTRATION DETAILS:**

- CWL Member - \$75.00
- Non-Member of CWL - \$125.00

Registration is a two-part process; once you register online, you will receive a confirmation containing the link to register for the Zoom component of the program, please complete the Zoom registration to receive your participation link.

**REGISTER HERE**

Registration closes at 8:00am on Tuesday, March 14, 2023

OR SCAN CODE TO REGISTER



**Luis Céspedes**  
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**Adam Hofmann**  
 Chair, Commission on Judicial Nominees Evaluation (JNE)

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**QUESTIONS? PLEASE CONTACT CWL: INFO@CWL.ORG 916-930-9020 | WWW.CWL.ORG**

**Be a Part of the CWL Board of Governors**  
**Declare Your Intent to Run by April 30**

Join the leadership of CWL by running for a seat on the Board of Governors. The deadline to declare your candidacy is April 30 – email [info@cwl.org](mailto:info@cwl.org) to declare your intent to run for a district governor seat.

CWL's Board of Governors is comprised of district governors from nine geographic districts, plus up to two at-large governors appointed by the president, affiliate governors representing each of CWL's affiliate organizations, up to two judicial liaisons, and the immediate past president.

District governors serve two-year terms and may serve for up to three consecutive terms. They may serve additional terms after a one-year absence from the board. At-large, affiliate governors, and judicial liaisons serve one-year terms.

More populous districts are represented by more than one district governor. Five district governors represent District 7, which covers Los Angeles County, while two district governors each represent District 3 (Alameda, Contra Costa, San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties), District 4 (San Francisco and Marin Counties), and District 9 (San Diego and Imperial Counties).

CWL members are eligible to run in the district where they maintain either their place of residence or their principal business office.

**District Governor seats that are up for election in 2023 are:**

**District 2** (one seat):

Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Napa, Sacramento, Solano, Sonoma, Tuolumne and Yolo Counties

**District 3** (one of two seats):

Alameda, Contra Costa, San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties

**District 4** (one of two seat):

San Francisco and Marin Counties

**District 6** (one seat):

Riverside, San Bernardino, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties

**District 7** (three of five seats):

Los Angeles County

**District 9** (one of two seats):

San Diego and Imperial Counties

**For questions, contact the CWL office at (916) 930-9020 or by email at [info@cwl.org](mailto:info@cwl.org).**



## Law Student Members – Submit Scholarship Applications by June 5

CWL student members are invited to apply for the 2023 Nancy E. O’Malley Scholarship, presented by the CWL Foundation.

Applications, submitted [online](#), are due June 5 at 5 p.m.

The \$7,500 scholarship honors CWL past president Nancy E. O’Malley, who retired at the end of 2022 as Alameda County District Attorney.

To be eligible, an applicant must be:

- a member of CWL
- currently enrolled in a California-accredited law school (including students graduating in Spring 2023)
- in the top 50% of their law school class
- demonstrate financial need, and
- demonstrate a commitment to issues affecting women or children.

Applicants must submit a completed application online, along with a current resume, including at least two references; a law school transcript; a letter of good standing from their current law school; a personal statement addressing their commitment to issues affecting women and/or children, including how that commitment will continue after law school graduation; and one to three letters of recommendation. At least one letter must be from someone with personal knowledge of the applicant’s dedication to issues affecting women and/or children in the community.

The CWL Foundation established the scholarship in 2016 in honor of Nancy O’Malley, who served as CWL president from 2009-2010. O’Malley was the first woman to serve as Alameda County District Attorney, holding the post from 2009 until 2022. She is a nationally recognized expert in issues involving violence against women and persons with disabilities, as well as interpersonal violence including sexual assault, domestic violence, elder and child abuse, stalking, and human exploitation and trafficking. She created the Alameda County Family Justice Center, which brings resources for victims of violence together under one roof and now serves as a model for courts nationwide. She also has implemented criminal justice reforms in Alameda County, including drug courts and diversion programs that are designed to reduce prison incarceration rates.

Past Nancy E. O’Malley Scholarship winners include:

- 2022 Corina Yetter, UC Davis School of Law
- 2021 Amelia Andrews-Jubelt, Loyola Law School
- 2020 Mariah Cooks, Golden Gate University School of Law
- 2019 Janani Ramachandran, UC Berkeley School of Law
- 2018 Edrina Nazaradeh, Pepperdine University Caruso School of Law
- 2017 Jenna Klein, UC Berkeley School of Law

***For more information and to apply, visit the scholarship page [online](#).***

CWL



# Blazing Our Path Forward

**CWL Annual Conference**

Avenue of the Arts Hotel, Costa Mesa

May 19, 2023

*Save The Date*



## CWL Announces Winners of 2023 Annual Awards

BY TRACY HUGHES

California Women Lawyers is pleased to announce the 2023 winners of our four signature awards – two honoring judicial officers and two honoring attorneys.

### Fay Stender Award



Gloria Allred

CWL will honor renowned attorney Gloria Allred with its 2023 Fay Stender Award at the CWL annual dinner Sept. 21 in San Diego.

The award, named for Bay Area attorney Fay Stender who passed away in 1980, is given to a feminist attorney, who, like Stender, is committed to the representation of women, disadvantaged groups and unpopular causes, and whose courage, zest for life and demonstrated ability to effect change as a single individual makes her a role model for women attorneys. Award criteria include work from a demonstrated feminist perspective and vigorous advocacy on behalf of women litigants.

Allred has long been known as a feminist who has sometimes sparked controversy. In nominating her for the Fay Stender Award, her peers said Allred “has been outspoken that she is a feminist when it was not fashionable to be a feminist.”

Since founding Allred, Maroko & Goldberg in 1976, Allred has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to representing women, disadvantaged and under-represented groups.

In recent years, she has been well known for advocating for victims of rape, sexual harassment and domestic violence. She represented three victims in Harvey Weinstein’s Los Angeles

rape trial, which resulted in the disgraced producer’s conviction in December. She represented 20 sexual assault victims of financier Jeffrey Epstein, 28 women who accused Bill Cosby of sexual assault, sexual harassment, and other sexual misconduct, and three women who accused former president Donald Trump of sexual misconduct. She has represented clients in suits against celebrities and public figures such as Mötley Crüe drummer Tommy Lee, former California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, past presidential candidate Herman Cain, actors Sacha Baron Cohen and Esai Morales, and musician R. Kelly.

Allred also has made a mark representing individuals who have been discriminated against because of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation or because of their HIV/AIDS status.

In 1980, she filed a class action lawsuit against the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department, seeking to stop the Department from routinely shackling pregnant inmates to beds while the women were in labor and delivering their babies. A settlement achieved in 1984 ended the practice.

In 2004, Allred and her firm filed the first lawsuit in California challenging the denial of marriage licenses for same-sex couples as being unconstitutional. The case – which was consolidated with lawsuits filed by the American Civil Liberties Union, the City and County of San Francisco, and three other suits – went to the California Supreme Court as *In re Marriage Cases*, and on May 15, 2008, the Court affirmed the right of same-sex couples to marry in California.

*Continues on page 12*

## Judith Soley Award



Ashleigh Aitken

Ashleigh Aitken, the recently sworn-in mayor of Anaheim, will receive CWL's 2023 Judith Soley Lawyer as Citizen Award at a reception at the CWL annual conference May 19 in Costa Mesa.

The award, named for a longtime CWL board member who was killed by the husband of a client, recognizes attorneys who have made a significant contribution to their community, extending beyond the practice of law, have devoted time and effort to the public good, and exemplify the values and mission of CWL.

Aitken is Of Counsel at Aitken Aitken Cohn in Santa Ana, where she specializes in complex business litigation, class actions and major personal injury cases. She was part of the counsel team in

the 2010 Toyota class action lawsuit that culminated in the largest U.S. automobile class action settlement to date. She previously served as a federal prosecutor, practicing in the Los Angeles and Santa Ana Office of the U.S. Attorney for the Central District of California. While serving as an assistant United States attorney, she prosecuted cases involving armed bank robbery, narcotics, mail and wire fraud, child pornography and firearms violations. Prior to becoming a prosecutor, Aitken was a civil litigator with the law firm of Morrison Foerster, LLP, specializing in complex business litigation and class action defense, and at Nossaman, Guthner, Knox & Elliott, LLP, where she worked on environmental and condemnation litigation.

Aitken has a long history of public service, having served as president of the Orange County Women Lawyers Association, the Orange County Bar Association, the Orange County Bar Association Charitable Fund, and the Celtic Bar Association. She was appointed by Governor Jerry Brown to serve on the Orange County Fair Board, where she served as chair in 2015. Aitken also previously served two terms on the Anaheim Community Services Board and was chair from 2011-2013.

She was elected mayor of Anaheim, the most populous city in Orange County and the tenth most populous city in California, in November, defeating the incumbent mayor. She took office in December, as the first woman mayor in Anaheim's 165-year history.

## Joan Dempsey Klein Distinguished Jurist Award



Hon. Michelle Williams Court

Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Michelle Williams Court will receive CWL's 2023 Joan Dempsey Klein Distinguished Jurist Award at a summer reception in Los Angeles.

The award honors a Southern California judge each year, recognizing excellence as a jurist, longstanding vigorous service, and inspiration to the women lawyers of California. Dempsey Klein – a founder and provisional president of CWL and the first president of the National Association of Women Judges – was committed to supporting women in the legal profession and was known as a compassionate jurist who encouraged dialogue and fostered consensus among litigants.

Court's commitment to public service began before law school, when she worked at AIDS Project LA. After graduating from law school, she embarked on a legal career dedicated to public service and civil rights advocacy, with work in national class action civil rights cases at the ACLU and private law firms. She also worked at the Department of Housing and Urban Development and served as the Vice President and General Counsel of Bet Tzedek, an LA-based organization committed to providing legal services to the disadvantaged.

Appointed to the bench by Governor Jerry Brown in December 2011, Court currently serves as chair of the Los Angeles Superior Court's Technology Committee, guiding policy decisions regarding technological innovation and assisting in developing the court's technology training. She effectively managed the technological transition during the pandemic to allow for virtual appearances.

She has served on the court's Executive Committee and 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.

She also is completing a term as Vice President of the Los Angeles Law Library Board of Trustees.

A committed educator, Court regularly conducts trainings for attorneys and judges, and prepares and delivers the Rutter Guide's annual update on Personal Injury cases. Her peers describe her as "a natural leader both on and off the bench and a role model and a mentor, especially for women of color."



## Rose Bird Memorial Award



Hon. Erica Yew

Santa Clara County Superior Court Judge Erica Yew will receive CWL's 2023 Rose Bird Memorial Award at a reception in Santa Clara County later this year.

The Rose Bird Memorial Award – named for one of CWL's founders, who served as the first female California Supreme Court justice and the first female Chief Justice – is presented annually to a Northern California judge who has demonstrated excellence as a jurist, longstanding or groundbreaking public service, and who serves as an inspiration to women lawyers in California.

Appointed to the bench by Governor Gray Davis in 2001, Yew was the first Asian-American woman to serve on the Santa Clara County bench. Her judicial assignments have included a variety of court settings, such as presiding over a dependency drug treatment court and other collaborative problem-solving courts.

Yew has served in many leadership roles as a judge. She served on the California Commission on Judicial Performance from 2010 to 2019, chairing the commission from 2013 to 2016. She served as a member of the Judicial Council from 2009 to 2012. She was appointed to the California Committee on Judicial Ethics Opinions in 2019. She has served on the California Access to Justice Commission since 2014 and co-chairs the commission's Racial Justice and Intersectionality Committee. She also co-chairs the California Judicial Mentor Program, is a vice president of the California Judges Association, and serves on the board for the National Center for State Courts, for which she chairs the NCSC's Programs Committee.



Tracy Hughes is First Vice President of California Women Lawyers and a partner at Robinson Calcagnie, Inc., in Newport Beach. She chairs the CWL Awards Committee Chair.

Public service is a priority for Yew, and she is active in minority bar associations, serves as a mentor for women attorneys, and is committed to the advancement of minorities in the legal profession. She has received a number of awards for her community service and work as a judge, including Outstanding Jurist of the Year in 2016 from the Santa Clara County Bar Association and the 2017 Distinguished Service Award from the Judicial Council. She also was recognized by the American Leadership Forum with the John W. Gardner Leadership Award in 2014 for her demonstrated civility, inclusiveness, and respect for others in the courtroom.



# ANNUAL DINNER

*Save The Date*

San Diego Marriott Marquis

September 21, 2023





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# Losing Our [Best] Minds: Addressing the Attrition Crisis of Women Lawyers in a Post-Pandemic World

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BY BREE BUCHANAN, JODI CLEESATTLE AND KATY GOSHTASBI

## I. THE ATTRITION CRISIS AMONG WOMEN LAWYERS

### A. Findings of the Stress, Drink, Leave Study of California and D.C. Lawyers

In 2021, a new study was published that shed light on the disturbing trend of women leaving the legal profession at alarming rates. Aptly titled, “Stress, drink, leave: An examination of gender-specific risk factors for mental health problems and attrition among licensed lawyers,” (hereinafter “Stress, Drink, Leave study”) this study of 2,863 employed California and D.C. lawyers found “the prevalence and severity of depression, anxiety, stress, and risky/hazardous drinking were significantly higher among women lawyers.” Alarming, researchers found that 24.2% of women were considering leaving the legal profession due to mental health problems, burnout, or stress, compared to only 17.4% of men surveyed.<sup>1</sup>

The Stress, Drink, Leave study questioned lawyers about predictors that drive attrition, including stress, substance misuse, effort-reward imbalance, work overcommitment, likelihood of promotion, and work-family conflict. Women had significantly higher scores than men for effort-reward imbalance (reflecting greater effort needed for reward), overcommitment (reflecting greater exhaustion and overwhelm because of work demands), and work-family conflict (reflecting greater interference of work with family life). Men scored higher than women with respect to perceived likelihood of promotion.

The workplace-related factor most predictive of contemplating leaving the legal profession for women was work-family conflict. Work-family conflict was also a significant factor for men, but less so. This was true even though the men surveyed were more likely to be married with children than the women surveyed.<sup>2</sup>

Elevated levels of work-family conflict have long shown to correlate with higher depression, anxiety, emotional exhaustion, illness symptoms, and alcohol misuse.

Work overcommitment (i.e., excessive workload) was strongly associated with stress in the lawyers surveyed, with the relationship strongest in women. Interestingly, however, women were slightly less likely than men to leave the profession based on this factor. For those experiencing high work overcommitment, men were more than twice as likely to contemplate leaving the profession due to mental health with women following close behind at being 1.78 times more likely to leave.

Another workplace-related factor — the perceived likelihood of promotion — was associated with a lower likelihood of leaving or contemplating leaving the profession due to mental health, burnout, or stress for men, but not for women. The study authors speculate that likelihood of promotion is a less significant factor in keeping women in the legal profession because women frequently anticipate less opportunity or chance for promotion, thereby rendering that possibility less relevant to their calculation about whether to leave.<sup>3</sup>

In summarizing the study’s findings, Krill writes:

“[M]ore women than men contemplated leaving the profession due to mental health problems, burnout, or stress. This is an undesirable outcome for a profession long bedeviled by its inability to retain female attorneys and raises the question of whether improving workplace factors that influence poor mental health might be an important missing ingredient in those efforts.”

<sup>1</sup> Since data collection occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic, efforts were made—both in the wording of the survey questions and in the statistical analyses—to control for the impact of the pandemic on participants’ responses. The authors note that despite their efforts to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on the survey responses, it is of course possible that the accuracy of reporting from some participants may have nonetheless been affected.

<sup>2</sup> Women were significantly less likely to be married (75.3% vs. 58.3%), were more likely to be divorced (10.5% vs. 7.9%) or never married (21.4% vs. 9.3%) and were less likely to have children compared to men (51.4% vs. 69.3%).

<sup>3</sup> The reasons for women leaving law firms and the legal profession extend beyond those studied, and can include harassment or abuse, as well as lack of opportunities for advancement.

*Continues on page 18*



## B. Studies Revealing Attrition Among All Women and Women of Color

The Stress Drink Leave study builds on research conducted since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 showing elevated levels of attrition (having already left a job) and attrition intention (planning to leave a job) by women lawyers:

- [ABA’s Practicing Law in the Pandemic and Moving Forward, conducted in 2020](#), found that 37% of women were considering quitting the profession entirely, while 53% of women with children under five years of age were thinking about going part-time. Reasons cited for their plans to leave their current job all related to work-life balance concerns.
- Thomson Reuters’ [2022 Law Firms Stay-Go Report](#) found that the lawyers with the greatest flight risk were women, ethnic minorities, and the LGBTQ community. Lawyers (men and women) belonging to an ethnic minority had a 50% flight risk with black lawyers topping out at 60%.

Prior to the pandemic, the ABA report [Walking Out the Door](#) explored the attrition of senior women lawyers from the ranks NJL 500 firms. These women reported that, “on account of their gender, they are significantly more likely than their male counterparts to be overlooked for advancement; denied a salary increase or bonus; denied equal access to business development opportunities; become subjected to implicit biases, double standards, and sexual harassment; be perceived as less committed to their careers.” In this study, experienced women lawyers indicated important influences on women leaving their firm were: caretaking commitments (58%), level of stress at work (54%), emphasis on originating business (51%), billable hours (50%), no longer wishing to practice (49%), work/life balance (46%), and health concerns (42%).

Research reveals the promise in focusing on improvements to mental health and overall well-being and indicates that this effort will pay dividends in reducing the number of women who are leaving the practice of law. In fact, the Thomson Reuters Stay-Go Report showed lawyers were leaving firms for reasons not related to compensation. Instead, the firms doing the best in retaining lawyers were those who expressed concern for their lawyers’ well-being, fostered supportive and collaborative structures, focused on equitable treatment among all lawyers, and provided clear career paths.

These findings point to an impending attrition crisis of women leaving the legal profession at a time when meaningful — yet slow and still insufficient — strides towards gender parity were taking hold. The [2022 Glass Ceiling Report](#) (focused on the top 200 largest firms by headcount) showed that despite the fact

**“Losing so much of the talent pool before it reaches the equity partnership is bad for business and bad for clients. From a financial standpoint, firms sacrifice hundreds of thousands of dollars — if not millions — each year because of employee turnover. And if too many associates leave the nest...the entire law firm business model will be at risk.”**

— [Leopard Solutions, Women Leaving Law](#)

that women now comprise 49% of associates, only 27% of all partners are female with approximately one-third of management committees being comprised of women. Somewhere along the way, the talent pipeline to the top effectively springs a leak as the number of women precipitously diminishes among the highest echelons of private practice.

Research shows the experiences of women of color differ from the experiences reported for women in general (which have typically reflected only the experiences of white women) in the legal profession. Little has changed since [foundational research](#) was conducted in the 2000s revealing that women of color feel invisible and unsupported in a work environment that is indifferent, if not outright hostile, to their unique perspectives and challenges. Not surprisingly, women of color were found to be leaving law firms for more flexibility, as well as more predictable and less subjective pathways for advancement. As discussed in the [2020 ABA Report, Left Out and Left Behind](#), researchers found that one-fourth of women of color associates make it to equity partner while one-half of white women associates achieve this prized status. Given market demands, law firms intent upon maintaining a competitive edge must uncover means to improve the flow of talent to the upper ranks. We believe a key to that success lies in mitigating the impediments to living a personally and professionally satisfying life currently presented by many firms’ policies, practices, and overall culture.

## C. Call to Legal Employers for Action

To stem this tide of attrition by women, legal employers must identify — and then correct — the adverse conditions that are contributing to diminished well-being and that drove the Great Resignation, a significant trend during the COVID-19 pandemic that threatens the profitability and legitimacy of the profession.

Having a diverse firm is essential to having a thriving firm, one that is attractive to corporate clients who are increasingly demanding diversity on their legal teams. Any inability to recruit and retain women — and lawyers of color — at associate levels will result in a reduced pool of candidates for promotion to equity and

**“Losing talented lawyers due to attrition caused by poor well-being derails careers, negatively impacts individual well-being, reduces the limited talent pool in the midst of a shortage, and is inconsistent with the values of the profession in the 21st century.”**

— [Michael J. Kasdan, Lawyering While Human](#)

leadership status. This diminished pipeline will continue to thwart diversity up the ranks if the firm is not adept at attracting and retaining lateral diverse hires. In a [2019 survey](#) published by the ABA, a large majority of managing partners said that diversity at senior levels was important to achieve better decision-making and to be responsive to markets. Despite this acknowledgement, changes to policies and practices which could effectively promote recruitment and retention have been slow.

**“Why is diversity important to the success of a business? More than a decade of studies consistently shows that people from diverse backgrounds, working together, produce more innovation and achieve better solutions and results. Law firms that successfully hire, retain, and advance female lawyers and lawyers of color will have a competitive advantage.”**

— [Stephanie Scharf and Roberta Leibenberg, The Red Bee Group](#)

This report seeks to define the problem of — and sound the alarm regarding — the attrition of women lawyers. Most importantly, it sets out actionable recommendations and strategies designed to positively impact the crisis. We also make suggestions for supporting legal employer accountability in efforts to address the attrition crisis. Additionally, we make recommendations to assist students and prospective lateral hires in finding the best employer fit, one where their well-being will be supported, and they have the best hope of having a thriving professional and personal life.

This report is for:

- Law firm leadership and those in supervisory positions, as well as human resources, professional development, and DEI staff;

- Lawyers and professional staff seeking solutions to promote within their workplace; and
- Prospective employees, particularly law students (the future of the profession and feeders of the employment pipeline) and laterals.

We invite these readers to consider the impact that diminished well-being and the loss of a significant segment of women lawyers will have on the profession. Those seeking to stem this trend will find a list of varied recommendations, and adoption of even some will be a step in the direction of creating a professional culture that honors the individual person first, thereby allowing each lawyer to work efficiently, and live a life of balance, health, and satisfaction.

## II. RECOMMENDATIONS AND STRATEGIES FOR RETAINING WOMEN (AND ALL) LAWYERS

### A. Recommendations for Legal Employers

Understanding the factors that pose the greatest risk of women leaving the legal profession can help legal employers develop retention programs and policies that will effectively stem the tide of attrition by women — and by all lawyers, for that matter. To keep women lawyers, employers should focus on those factors that will reduce elevated levels of chronic stress created by work-family conflict and the corresponding burden of work overcommitment, better balance the level of effort needed to achieve firm rewards or recognition and create more meaningful paths for promotion.

We encourage legal employers, particularly larger law firms, to embed within their structures practices and policies so that well-being becomes integral to the firm experience. Ideas addressed by this report that can provide the greatest impact include<sup>4</sup>:

1. Flexible employment practices, including equitable work policies and compensation practices;
2. A focus on employee well-being, including providing opportunities for rest and regeneration and eliminating any workplace toxicity;
3. Professional development and leadership training; and
4. Strategies to promote connection, especially within affinity groups.

<sup>4</sup> These recommendations build upon the varied evidence-based strategies encouraged by the profession-wide well-being movement, including mindfulness, meditation, and yoga, in addition to education on identifying behavioral health disorders and the expansion of employer-provided behavioral health resources, inter alia. An excellent source for learning about implementation of these recommendations is the [ABA Toolkit for Lawyers and Legal Employers](#).

## 1. Offer Flexible Employment

Flexible employment policies are one way in which employers can help lawyers reduce work-family conflict, as well as find a better balance of work while still advancing their careers. Addressing this conflict is vital for firms concerned about the well-being of their lawyers as [studies](#) have consistently shown that elevated work-life conflict is related to higher depression, anxiety, emotional exhaustion, illness symptoms, and alcohol misuse. This much sought-after balance is also of increasing importance to associates and — likely — the generations to follow. As evidence of this trend, [2021 research](#) of 3,700 mid-level associates at large U.S. law firms showed that 60% would consider leaving their current firm for better work-life balance, while only 27% would leave for higher compensation. A [recent ABA study](#) shows that younger generations highly value flexibility and freedom to balance their work and personal lives in a fluid manner. Additionally, they look to and expect that their employer will support them in these efforts.

Policies to promote flexibility can include:

- Offering scaled hours matched to scaled compensation, while maintaining paths to leadership and equity partnership. A growing number of firms [report](#) allowing reduced-hours tracks that still lead to partnership. Other firms offer reduced hours tracks with no partnership path (sometimes pejoratively referred to as a “mommy track”) but these should still permit lawyers to participate in leadership in meaningful ways, whether serving on committees, heading practice groups, or otherwise contributing to firm leadership. And no matter the track, these lawyers should have the opportunity to work on interesting matters that are valued by the firm.
- Considering alternatives to traditional billable hours models. While most firms operate using some form of billable hour requirement or goal for lawyers — and are not likely to abandon the concept — firms can help reduce stress around the billable hour. Transparency in expectations is important. If the stated billable hour requirement is 1,900, that should be the true requirement, not a baseline. Law firms should implement better methods of valuing non-billable, firm citizenship time —the time spent on administrative tasks such as internal meetings, client development, marketing, recruitment, and mentoring. This is especially important for the retention of women and minority lawyers who often bear heavier administrative burdens at firms, especially in recruitment, mentoring, and managing DEI efforts. Giving billable credit for pro bono hours also can aid with

attorney retention, as these cases often provide a boost in job satisfaction.

- Permitting remote work. The COVID-19 pandemic taught us that traditional workplace norms — emphasizing face time in the office — are not necessarily required for productivity. Law firms that never considered allowing telework pre-pandemic quickly converted, out of necessity, to virtual workspaces, with lawyers and staff working from home all or most of the time. Even as the pandemic is winding down, many firms maintain hybrid workforces, with lawyers and staff continuing to work remotely at least part of the time.<sup>5</sup> Allowing at least some telework days can help improve employee job satisfaction, whether by giving parents more family time in lieu of commute time, allowing minority lawyers a break from majority-white office environments, or simply allowing lawyers a more comfortable and safer workspace at home.

**“While the pandemic drastically changed how people work, it also gave us a glimpse of just how successful a flexible workplace could be post-pandemic when structure and thoughtful support systems are in place.”**

**— Manar Morales, CEO, Diversity & Flexibility Alliance**

## 2. Prioritize Employee Well-Being

To attract and retain the best lawyers, legal employers should embed well-being into their organizational structures and create policies that may blunt the effects of law’s inherently high and chronic levels of stress. Methods of prioritizing well-being include:

- Maintaining a well-being committee, with ties to — and buy-in from — firm leadership. The firm should allocate to it adequate funding and authorize a scope of work that includes — but also extends beyond — developing creative, experiential offerings such as classes on meditation, tips on mindfulness, get-away-from-your-desk lunches or breaks, group hikes, or healthy cooking classes. This committee could also be consulted on firm benefits, policies, and practices that may positively or negatively impact staff well-being.

- Adopting policies that promote well-being and support help-seeking for those experiencing a behavioral health issue. Every mid- to large-size firm should have well-publicized leave policies that encourage use of paid leave for vacation, time spent with family, treatment of physical and mental health issues, and rest and rejuvenation. Firm requirements for taking time away for a behavioral health reason (from a couple of hours each week to attend talk therapy to several months for inpatient treatment) should be explicit, with direction given as to whom in the firm requests should be made, assurances of confidentiality, and guidelines on what will be expected of both the employee and the firm to ensure successful reintegration. An example of such a leave policy can be found [here](#) on the ABA’s website.
- Increasing the volume of communications about mental health and well-being with regular missives from leadership (not just human resources) stressing the importance of these topics to the firm and underscoring the imperative of seeking help sooner rather than later. Clear information should be included about how to access the firm’s well-being and mental health resources.
- Creating a culture of respecting lawyers’ personal time, running counter to the prevailing expectation of being always on call. This will require firms to communicate their philosophy with clients, while reassuring them that their needs will be met by refreshed and engaged lawyers during reasonable work hours. Even more important than clients, firm leaders and those with supervisory functions must fully buy in to the importance of placing some guardrails on expectations of around-the-clock availability. The [U.S. Bank](#) has developed best practices around this thorny topic. Some general ideas for building more flexibility into team time-management practices include:
  - Clearly communicating response-time needs in emails, especially if the sender chooses to send the email after-hours or on a weekend
  - Specifying deadlines and expressly stating when projects are not urgent
  - Routinely consulting with affected persons (whenever possible) before setting and agreeing to deadlines
  - Designating one day each week as “meeting free” or “zoom free”
- Adopting zero-tolerance policies toward discrimination, harassment, and bullying. Firms should foster a culture of teamwork, based upon mutual respect, collaboration, and open communication. Psychological safety has become a watch word for firms seeking to create a workplace where all members feel they can speak their mind, ask for help, and admit mistakes. Additionally, firms should be mindful of micro-aggressions that can accumulate to the detriment of women and minority lawyers who may ultimately find they must leave to simply protect their own well-being.

**“Firms [must] be willing to have tough conversations to address more nuanced interactions that are isolating and demoralizing, including passive-aggressive behavior, condescension and intimidation, failure to observe personal boundaries, and micro-aggressions.”**

**— The American Lawyer’s 2022 Young Lawyer Editorial Board**

- Conducting a review of resources available for lawyers and staff who may be experiencing a behavioral health problem. Often, personnel are directed to the firm’s employee assistance program, which may present a daunting challenge to quickly finding an available, culturally appropriate, and high-quality therapist or other behavioral health provider. Firms should also confirm that their behavioral health insurance coverage meets [California](#) (or relevant state) and federally mandated parity requirements.

## 3. Enhance Attention to Leadership Training and Professional Development

The behavior of a firm’s leaders sets the tone for the entire firm and is the most definitive influence — for ill or otherwise — on their members’ quality of life. Because their words and deeds are scrutinized by all members of the firm, they have an outsized role in creating or ameliorating the attrition crisis. Professional development is an area where legal employers can also have a strong impact on their members’ experiences, signaling that the firm is invested in their professional success and well-being.

- For all law firm personnel in leadership and supervisory positions, training on effective, empathetic communication should be offered at regular intervals. They are also primarily responsible for creating the firm’s culture, particularly when it comes to shaping members’ perceptions about the extent to which the firm does — or does not — support well-being and work-life balance. Depending upon their actions and attitudes, employees quickly learn whether behavioral health issues and general well-being are valued or taboo topics at the firm. When stigma around mental health is observable, personnel will predictably remain silent and avoid engaging in efforts to seek help for a behavioral health issue for themselves or a colleague.

**“Firm leaders [must] prioritize culture like they do revenue, billable hours, superior client service, and business development, by evaluating themselves and talking about culture as much as they do those other things.”**

**— The American Lawyer’s 2022 Young Lawyer Editorial Board**

<sup>5</sup> Indeed, a survey of Am Law 200 firms conducted in February 2022 by multinational professional services firm Aon shows that 79% of firms expect all or most of their workforce to be eligible for a hybrid work arrangement, and 80% have completed or were developing formal assessments of roles and individual workers eligible for full remote work in perpetuity. (2022 U.S. Law Firm Work/Life Benefit Survey, Aon (April 2022), available online at: <https://www.aon.com/risk-services/professional-services/major-us-law-firms-invest-in-non-traditional-benefits-for-attorneys-and-staff>.)

- The true leadership capacity of women lawyers should be highlighted and nurtured. When women are empowered with leadership skills, critical psychological needs of autonomy and competence are met with a resulting increase in one's sense of well-being, a strong protective factor against the corrosive effects of stress and, by extension, attrition. Professional staff should also be included in these efforts given their indispensable role in providing supports for all functions of the firm.
- Leadership training programs should focus on traits that are frequently associated with women and that are often overlooked in the business and legal world, including a leader's capacity for empathy, level of emotional quotient (EQ), and how she combines her empathy and EQ to effectively communicate with clients and colleagues. Clients are looking to be understood, listened to, and appreciated—all traits of effective leaders.
- Law firms that are intent upon retaining talent should provide career or executive coaching, as lack of career progression contributes to dissatisfaction and a desire to leave. Likewise, a lack of interest in professional progress by the firm's lawyers drives diminished well-being in and of itself. A 2022 study by Patrick Krill revealed a striking health hierarchy among lawyers that appears linked to their employers' values, such that lawyers with the best mental and physical health—and lowest rate of attrition—work in environments that make them feel most valued for their skill, talent, professionalism, or inherent worth as a human being. In contrast, lawyers who were valued merely for their billing ability—coupled with those who were given little to no feedback—were experiencing worse health, an increase in alcohol usage, and—by a large margin—were more likely to report attrition intentions. By focusing on a lawyer's career path, the firm conveys to the lawyer that she is valued for her skills as a lawyer rather than as "a cog in the wheel." Well-designed and supported mentoring programs can bolster efforts to highlight career paths within a firm, potentially obviating intentions to move where the "the grass is greener." These programs should focus on creating opportunities and supports that will increase the lawyer's ability to move up the firm ladder, such as client interaction, taking the lead on a case, ensuring recognition for achievements, etc.

***"When women face barriers to advancement, and don't see a path forward, they won't stay."***

***— Jacqueline Bell, in A Deep Dive Into the Glass Ceiling Report, 2022***

<sup>6</sup> Information about LAP is online at <https://www.calbar.ca.gov/Attorneys/For-Attorneys/Lawyer-Assistance-Program>. The website includes a Resources page that includes links to self-assessment tests, publications, and other online resources.

<sup>7</sup> Other resources include the Lawyers Depression Project (<https://www.lawyersdepressionproject.org/>), an online peer-to-peer support group for legal professionals, and the American Bar Association's Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs ([https://www.americanbar.org/groups/lawyer\\_assistance/](https://www.americanbar.org/groups/lawyer_assistance/)), which provides a directory of LAPs throughout the country as well as links to mental health and other resources.

#### 4. Deploy Strategies to Promote Connection and a Sense of Belonging

Lawyers who feel connected to their work, their employers, their peers, and their legal community are apt to be less stressed and more likely to stick with their legal careers. Legal employers are well-served, then, by encouraging and promoting these types of connections:

- Connections to work. Employers can help lawyers, especially newer lawyers, feel more connected to their work and career path by providing formal or informal development plans, mentoring, check-ins about work allocation and projects, and discussions of future opportunities and plans.
- Connections to colleagues. Firms can create intentional network groups—based in or across practice groups and offices—to allow lawyers to connect and find mutual support. Well-organized mentoring programs can also provide means for productive and supportive relationships.
- Connections to the legal community. Employers should encourage lawyers to participate in local bar associations, whether based on geography (city or county bar associations), practice area (e.g., employment law groups), diversity (e.g., [California Asian Pacific American Bar Association](#), [California Women Lawyers](#), or other women's bar associations) or affinity (e.g., LGBTQ+ bar associations, including regional affiliates of [The LGBTQ Bar](#)). Inns of Court are also great ways to connect with local lawyers and judges.
- Connections to peer support groups. The [State Bar of California's Lawyer Assistance Program \(LAP\)](#) helps current, former, and disbarred lawyers, law students and State Bar applicants dealing with mental health and/or substance use issues affecting their personal and professional lives.<sup>6</sup> Local bar associations also may offer peer support groups to help lawyers who are struggling. Law firms, too, may provide peer support groups or other in-house support, as well as Employee Assistance Programs that provide counseling for behavioral health issues.<sup>7</sup> Finally, the [Lawyers Depression Project](#) provides peer-to-peer mental health support groups for those in the legal profession.

#### 5. Utilize Strategies for Accountability

While the foregoing ideas can begin to effectively "move the dial" on well-being in a law firm, competing interests and agendas can distract from their successful implementation. Inclusion of accountability strategies to track the firm's progress—or the lack thereof—towards greater well-being should also lead to improved recruitment and retention of personnel, women in particular.

- Use internal surveys to identify well-being needs, causes of poor mental health, experiences of work-life conflict, etc. While best intentions may spur action on these issues, a sustainable and effective overall strategy for promoting well-being should be created in direct response to perceived needs of the firm's members. To that effect, we recommend use of anonymous surveys to determine how members perceive their well-being needs and whether those are met, how current policies and practices impact those needs, and how they believe the firm should respond in the future.
- In the annual cycle of performance reviews, systematically include a review of well-being needs, perceived barriers to improved well-being, and other factors that impact work-life conflict and retention.
- Sign on to the Well-Being in Law Pledge Campaign. The [ABA Well-Being Pledge Campaign](#), which currently boasts 212 signatories and includes some of the largest firms in the world, sets out a seven-point framework for guiding those signatories in the creation and maintenance of a variety of initiatives designed to promote the well-being of their members. The ABA holds semi-annual meetings for signatories to share and learn from one another.
- Review the U.K.'s [Mindful Business Charter](#) tenets to which signatories pledge, including a commitment to openness and respect, running "smart" meetings and time-saving communications, honoring rest periods, and being mindful when assigning work. International firms should consider signing on to the charter.

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THOSE SEEKING LEGAL EMPLOYMENT

#### A. Recommendations to Find the Best Work Environment for Well-Being

For those seeking employment as a lawyer—whether for a first job or a mid-career lateral move—finding the right employer fit

is key to good mental health in the future. Here are some basic tips and considerations for how to include well-being criteria into one's job search.

#### 1. Learn about the well-being in law crisis

For prospective employees, including law students and lateral hires, we recommend the following:

- Spend time researching and learning about the well-being crisis in the legal profession. Know where you fall on the spectrum of well-being and identify the supports that you will need in your employment to thrive. One resource that provides free and confidential behavioral health services to law students is each state's [lawyers assistance program](#).
- Use readily available well-being indicia (e.g., [Vault's annual rankings of the best law firms for wellness](#), the [ABA Well-Being Pledge Campaign](#)) to help you evaluate firms and see which aspects of the ratings align authentically with you so that your professional dreams and needs are realized.
- Learn more about the well-being in law crisis as it affects law students by listening to the seven-part podcast series, [The Path to Law Student Well-Beings](#), created by the ABA Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs.

#### 2. Assess the firm's culture and the prioritization of the well-being of its personnel

Better understanding your prospective employer's approach to well-being will allow for more informed decisions about the type of work environment you choose and increase the likelihood of it being a good fit over time.

- Reviewing a firm's website for declarations regarding well-being of employees, benefits and programs is just the beginning of learning about a firm's work culture. Dedicate time to looking at ALL the offerings by an employer and ask questions such as these:
  - Do the employer's core values match yours? A firm will typically advertise their guiding values and mission on their website. In the absence of this transparency, ask about this topic during your interview process.
  - What do others say about this employer? Can you interview current or past employees to find out the truth of how employees are treated?
  - What does your gut tell you about the employer? How does this information sync up with the well-being indicia that you researched?

- [NALP](#) (formerly known as the National Association for Law Placement) also provides valuable guidance regarding well-being issues for those involved in the job search process.
- Spend time compiling any questions and comments you have about an employer and then go through your network for answers. [LinkedIn](#) can be most helpful in finding a current or former employee who is willing to provide objective feedback.

### B. Women Law Students as Changemakers in the Profession

The Stress Drink Leave study found that younger lawyers were two to four times more likely than their older colleagues to report moderate or high stress. The distress of young lawyers is a natural result of distress levels of those in law school. A [major study of law students](#) published in 2021 showed that rates of those coming into law school with depression and anxiety had increased significantly since an earlier study conducted by the same authors in 2014. New questions asked in 2021 showed that 70% of students reported experiencing at least two or more types of trauma, with at least a quarter of these respondents having a score high enough to recommend evaluation for PTSD. Most concerning of all, nearly 70% of respondents reported needing help in the prior twelve months for mental health problems, up 42% from 2014.

Given the difficulty new lawyers can have with onboarding to a law firm, law schools can and should play an increased role in better equipping their students for the stresses of the legal profession. In fact, [academics](#) have begun to posit that law schools have an ethical duty to ensure they are creating a learning experience that promotes law student well-being and prevents a decline in their psychological health.

If you are a law student, please know that you are empowered to advocate for programs and practices that will go towards creating a culture of care rather than one of competition, ones that will help you maintain well-being over the course of both your law school and legal career. The aim is to support you and your fellow students in graduating with a sense of well-being and having tools to use to support your well-being as you begin your practice. Likely, the best first contact in these efforts will be your dean of student affairs.

In 2017, the National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being launched the current well-being in law movement with the groundbreaking study titled, [The Path to Lawyer Well-Being: Practical Recommendations for Positive Change](#), which set out nine recommendations directed at law schools for improving student well-being. In your advocacy, you may suggest that your school adopt or consider the following strategies which are based upon that report:

- Incorporate well-being into the curriculum by either offering a well-being class as a required (or at least “for credit”) course or including the topic in courses on professional responsibility. For more detailed information on implementation of this idea, see [this article](#) by University of Miami School of Law Dean of Students Janet Stearns.
- Conduct an anonymous well-being survey of the student body to determine rates of disorders, barriers to accessing help, needed resources, etc.
- Provide confidential peer support groups for students who may be struggling with the effects of chronic stress or other behavioral health concerns, as well as a student organization dedicated to mental health issues.
- Embed a mental health counselor from either the main campus mental health center or the [state’s lawyers assistance program](#).
- Hold social events that are not centered around drinking alcohol so that those who do not imbibe (for reasons related to health, religious beliefs, addiction, etc.) may also be included in the event.
- Work to reduce the stigma associated with mental health and substance use problems, and to promote help-seeking by students by hosting regular well-being events and sending student body-wide communications on behavioral health topics.

The ABA Committee that governs law school standards adopted [revisions to Standard 508](#) (effective February 2022), with implementation being mandatory by fall 2023. Look to see how your school is implementing requirements that schools provide all students with information about or services related to mental health, including substance use disorder. Interpretation 508-1 also directs law schools to mitigate barriers or stigma to accessing such services within the law school and wider legal community.

**“Take care of yourself’ messages do little for students who feel as though they are drowning. Law schools need to forge a culture in which self-care is not only possible but also valued.”**

**— Jonathan Todres of Georgia State University College of Law, in Bloomberg Law, 2022**

### C. Special Considerations for Women Lawyers Seeking New Employment

As a lawyer, you should and can advocate for policies, practices, and programs at your workplace that will promote — rather than diminish — your well-being. Change in any setting does not happen without advocacy and access to information from those who work there. Regardless of the size of your practice and firm, consider spearheading, or at least suggesting, in-depth and continuous training and coaching with respect to each lawyer’s well-being and person, peer support groups, more consistent attention to time off for rejuvenation, and a focus on healthy workplaces and processes. Many major law firms who are making a real effort to bring about change begin with the creation of a well-being committee which allows for a space for the firm’s other would-be well-being advocates to coalesce and strategize. Another common means to ensure the inclusion of well-being into the firm culture is to create a position dedicated to this topic.

**“A career in law should not be antagonistic to the full expression of lawyer’s humanity.”**

**— Patrick Krill, Stress, Drink Leave study**

### IV. Conclusion

As revealed in the Stress, Drink, Leave study and others cited above, current trends in legal employment are pointing to a potential loss of some of the most talented and valuable legal minds, those of its women lawyers. Unless consistent and effective efforts are made to create a profession that is more sustainable for the humans that comprise its ranks, law is set to experience a backslide in diversity.

The detrimental humanitarian and corporate impact will be difficult to reverse. By supporting the well-being of its people — and allowing them to work in this esteemed profession while also honoring the basic tenets that make our humanity worth living — law firms and legal employers of all types can remain competitive, profitable, and desirable places to work for the absolute best minds.

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# The Implicit Bias of (Non-)Motherhood

BY JULIE R. WOODS



“Do you have kids?”

“Why do people who don’t know me ask this question?”

“It’s easy.”

“For who?”

I did not meet my husband until I was almost 36. I may be approaching motherhood now at near-40. This is not uncommon, especially within a professional context. My colleagues have been most encouraging and excited during this time. But I can’t say that I have always felt a part of the club.

I saw bar association women’s events about balancing motherhood and a legal career, lessons from motherhood, and mothers supporting mothers. Where was my support group? I thought. How about for the next MCLE, “Bias and Bumble” or “Coffee Meets Bagel and a Restraining Order”?

As I chased my career with tenacity and vigor, I also dated. A lot. It was not easy. It took time. It required resilience. There were a lot of frogs. It was not the Disney fairytale – that is, until the ending. (“How did we get so lucky?” I ask my husband. “We paid our dues,” he replies, as we both erupt in laughter.)

In the meantime, as a singleton, I traipsed up and down courthouse hallways and mingled at professional events, fielding all-too-common, dreaded questions: “Do you have kids? Why not?” “You don’t have kids? Well, do you want kids?” “Why are you single? What’s wrong with you? (Har har!)” “Are you a lesbian?” or my favorite, as I carry my weight in my tummy, “Are you pregnant? You look pregnant!” The most abominable award, however, goes to my former law firm’s partner: “You bought a two-seater convertible?!?” (Clarified later: Where will a car seat go?)

My answers were usually filled with awkward humor or patient hope. “Not yet,” or “I hope to, someday,” or “Maybe when I find the right person,” or “I’ve been a little busy [with my profession, running marathons, volunteering. . .] (gesturing around me).” That is, until I learned that I do not need to explain myself for others’ comfort, nor my own.

The “do you have kids” question is easy to ask by those who do have and, usually, want to share their stories or find a common

bond with another. Or, it may be about curiosity and innate processing to categorize information with labels. Any which way, it usually says more about someone else that I need to be figured out or that they just want a segue to talk. I discern the desire to ask it, on many levels.

Ever the quiet, little feminist to champion my strength and independence, my mother waved her hand and said, “Don’t worry about it. Lots of women go it alone. You can do whatever you want. You can have a thriving career, and when you’re ready, adopt or have a child on your own, if that’s what you want to do. You can do anything!” (Thanks, mom.)

I wondered what my options were for the future: being independent, having a meaningful relationship, or starting a family with or without someone else by my side. I had a consultation about freezing my eggs: spend my life-savings at 35 to have an omelette ready for the skillet or scramble myself later. I took a breath and ordered the pancakes with a side of optimism; at least it was better than waffling with a smoothie before I was ready.

As attorneys, we are taught to consider our audience and to read the room. How about a different approach to small talk? When entering a casual conversation with an unfamiliar lass, may I suggest, “What do you like to do for fun?” or “What did you do last weekend?” or “How ‘bout them Giants?”



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# 2023 is the Year of Pay Transparency

California, two other states enact laws requiring employers to post salary information

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BY JODI CLEESATTLE



If you ever browse job postings on LinkedIn or job websites, you may notice something different about the listings for jobs in California. Salary information is now front and center – thanks to new pay transparency laws that went into effect this year in California and a handful of other states.

The Pay Transparency for Pay Equity Act, California Senate Bill 1162, was passed in September 2022 and became effective January 1, 2023. The law, authored by State Sen. Monique Limón, requires employers with 15 or more employees to include a pay scale in any open job posting, including postings with third parties such as LinkedIn or Indeed. The law, set forth in Labor Code section 432.3, also requires that all employers – large or small – must provide salary and wage information to employees upon request, and to job applicants upon “reasonable” request.

“This is a big moment for California workers, especially women and people of color who have long been impacted by systemic inequities that have left them earning far less than their colleagues,” Limón said in a statement. “California has once again shown its dedication to creating a more equitable economy with SB 1162. As we continue to build a sustainable economy, we must ensure every worker is paid equally.”

Since 2018, California has barred employers from requesting or relying on salary history information as a factor in determining whether to offer employment to an applicant or what salary to offer an applicant.

Laws requiring pay transparency – and barring reliance on salary history – are aimed at combating wage discrimination based on gender, race and ethnicity. Historically, employees who may have faced gender- or race-related pay disparities in previous jobs often were offered lower salaries based on their artificially low salary history, perpetuating a cycle of lower pay. Bans on salary history inquiries remove that factor, while pay transparency legislation ensures that employees have accurate information about the salary for their position and any position they might seek.

“The use of salary history in compensation decisions reinforces structural bias,” said Parisa Ijadi-Maghsoodi, chair of the San Diego County Commission on the Status of Women and Girls, and an attorney with Pease Law, APC. “Whether intentional or

not, an employee’s salary history can serve as a basis for an employer setting a depressed salary or wage. It perpetuates the gender- and race-based disparities we’ve been seeing in the labor market for the last half century. The literature shows that salary history bans are effective at narrowing the gender pay gap, particularly for women aged 35 and older and women with children.”

Senate Bill 1162 also amends Government Code section 12999 to add new reporting requirements for California employers, mandating that private employers with 100 or more employees submit an annual pay data report including information on median and mean hourly rates by race, ethnicity, and sex within each job category. Private employers with 100 or more employees hired through labor contractors also must submit annual pay data reports. Employers also have new internal record-keeping requirements – they are required to maintain a record of job titles and wage history during each employee’s employment and for three years after termination.

CWL member Arlene Yang, a principal with Meyers Nave who focuses on employment counseling and litigation, said the data reporting law is designed to have employers look more carefully at their own data to see if there are any disparities. She noted that large employers and federal contractors already are required to provide some of this information to the federal government.

“We’ve had inquiries from a number of employers who are interested in trying to do more pay equity analysis internally,” Yang said. “Generally, the employers we work with want to treat their workers right. It’s important to make sure you’re paying your employees fairly.”

Like California, Washington and Rhode Island passed pay transparency laws that went into effect in January.

In Washington, the Equal Pay and Opportunities Act, Ch. 49.58 RCW, requires employers with 15 or more employees to disclose salary or wage information along with a general description of all benefits and other compensation in every job posting. Like California and 29 other states, Washington already prohibited employers from seeking wage or salary history information from applicants.

*Continues on page 30*

In Rhode Island, that state’s amended Pay Equity Act does not require employers to post salary information on job listings, but it does require employers to provide salary range information to job seekers on request. (See R.I. Gen. Laws § 28-6-22.) Employers also must provide wage range information to current employees upon request and must provide such information whenever an employee is hired or moves into a new position, even absent a request.

Colorado was the first state to require public posting of salary information, with its Equal Pay for Equal Work Act, C.R.S. § 8-5-101, et seq., taking effect in 2021. The Colorado law requires employers to disclose wage and salary rates or ranges and a general description of benefits and other compensation in all job postings.

A number of other states – including Connecticut, Maryland, and Nevada – require salary information to be provided upon an employee’s or applicant’s request at various points during the hiring process, and more states are considering pay transparency legislation.

“California has a trend of always working to provide more power to employees,” Yang said. “With pay transparency laws, it changes the dynamic somewhat in hiring situations. It’s going to be interesting to see how this will spread across the country. We’re seeing more and more states adopting pay transparency legislation.”

CWL member Shannon Finley, a shareholder with Pettit Kohn Ingrassia Lutz & Dolin, who focuses on employment litigation and counseling, said the pay transparency laws are a step in the right direction.

“The new pay transparency laws are another step toward trying to close the equal pay gap,” said Finley, who is president of CWL affiliate Lawyers Club of San Diego and a past CWL affiliate governor. “If there’s a female employee who is applying for a certain job, without the posted salary information, she may have accepted that job for an amount under the pay range without realizing it. ... Every woman that can be educated about knowing her worth and advocating for herself and others can be part of the solution to the problem.”

Even before California’s new pay transparency law took effect this year, some attorneys had undertaken a pay transparency initiative of their own.

The South Asian Bar Association of San Diego launched the Equal Pay Transparency Initiative in 2021, offering a free public database (<https://equalpaytransparency.org/>) where attorneys

can anonymously submit salary and practice information. The initiative aims to close the gender and minority pay gaps by providing information attorneys can use to advocate for better pay.

The website allows attorneys to submit their salary information along with their number of years in practice, practice area, position (such as associate, staff attorney, or partner), size of their law firm or employer, and city in which they are employed. Attorneys also can identify their gender, race or ethnicity, and any billable hours requirement.

Tarina Mand, past president of SABA San Diego and an attorney at Dixon Diab & Chambers, spearheaded the Equal Pay Transparency Initiative. She said she decided to start the project because of the “black box” of secrecy regarding law firm salaries.

“There’s such a wage gap between women and men, especially for women of color,” Mand said. “It’s hard to know how to fix that problem if we don’t know what the problem is, if we can’t see what the discrepancy is. It’s hard to advocate for equal pay if we don’t know what we’re advocating for.”

Mand said she hopes to expand the database, which currently has about 71 entries for San Diego employers, and launch it nationwide through partnerships with and promotion by the American Bar Association and Federal Bar Association.

Ijadi-Maghsoodi said there is an urgent need to identify, analyze and remedy gender- and race-based pay disparities, many of which were exacerbated during the pandemic. And she said California’s new laws are a good start.

“Pay transparency combined with data reporting is vital in the fight for gender justice,” Ijadi-Maghsoodi said. “We know what gets measured gets tracked. The more granular the data the better. ... Knowing what gender, race, and ethnicity-based disparities exist not only in the organization as a whole, but particularly in the higher paying positions within the organization, is a step in the right direction.”



*Jodi Cleesattle is President-Elect of California Women Lawyers and is a Supervising Deputy Attorney General with the California Department of Justice in San Diego.*

# Equal Pay Day and the Gender Pay Gap

BY JODI CLEESATTLE

This year’s Equal Pay Day – the date symbolizing how far into the year women must work to earn what men earned in the previous year – is March 14, 2023.

Equal Pay Day was originated by the National Committee on Pay Equity (NCPE) in 1996 as a public awareness event to illustrate the gap between men’s and women’s median wages.

American women earned 82 cents for every dollar a man made in 2021, according to a December 2022 U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) report based on the U.S. Census Bureau’s published American Community Survey data on full-time workers. That figure is based on uncontrolled – or “raw” – data, which disregards things like job type and worker seniority. The 2022 World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Report shows the gender pay gap for American women as even larger – with women earning only 77 cents on the dollar compared to men.

The pay gap was greater for women in most racial and ethnic groups compared to White men, according to the GAO report. For example, for every dollar earned by White men, Latinas and Native American women earned an estimated 58 cents and Black or African-American women earned an estimated 63 cents, while White women earned an estimated 79 cents. Asian-American women showed the smallest pay gap, earning 97 cents on the dollar compared to White men.

## Gender Pay Gap by Race

Asian-American Women	\$0.97
White Women	\$0.79
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	\$0.66
Black Women	\$0.63
Hispanic/Latina Women	\$0.58
Native American Women	\$0.58

Source: Published American Community Service Data, U.S. Census Bureau, GAO-23-106041

That translates into different Equal Pay Days for different groups of women.

## 2023 Equal Pay Day Demographics

All Women	March 14
AAPI Women	May 3
LGBTQ+ Women	June 15
Black Women	September 21
Native American Women	November 30
Latina Women	December 8

Source: American Association of University Women Equal Pay Day Calendar

The GAO report also considered pay gaps among men and women in different job sectors, as well as in management positions. Full-time female managers earned an estimated 77 cents for every dollar earned by full-time male managers, for example.

Among public and private job sectors, the widest pay gap was for women who were self-employed in their own unincorporated business, earning an estimated 69 cents for every dollar earned by men. The smallest pay gap was for women working for the federal government or private non-profit organizations, where they earned 85 cents on the dollar compared to men. Women also were found to have the greatest representation in the private non-profit sector, making up 63.1 percent of that workforce.



Gender Pay Gap by Job Sector

Job Sector	Women's Pay for Every Dollar Earned by Men	Percentage of Workers in Sector who were Women
Self-Employed, Own Incorporated Business	\$0.69	28.4%
Self-Employed, Own Unincorporated Business	\$0.75	31.9%
Private For-Profit Company	\$0.78	40.4%
State Government	\$0.81	55.9%
Local Government	\$0.84	56.8%
Federal Government	\$0.85	42.6%
Private Non-Profit Organization	\$0.85	63.1%

Source: [Published American Community Service Data, U.S. Census Bureau, GAO-23-106041](#)

The GAO report examined (1) the representation of women, and the difference in pay between women and men, in the overall workforce; and (2) how pay differences between women and men in the overall workforce vary based on race and ethnicity and level of education. The GAO reviewed published summary-level data from the Census Bureau from 2018, 2019, and 2021. GAO did not review data from 2020 because the Census Bureau determined that those data did not meet statistical quality standards due to data collection disruptions early in the COVID-19 pandemic.

The GAO plans to issue a more detailed report in spring 2023.

Some of CWL's affiliate bar associations traditionally hold Equal Pay Day events to raise awareness of the pay gap.

Lawyers Club of San Diego, which has sponsored Equal Pay Day programs since 2013, will host a breakfast program featuring a panel discussion, according to Lawyers Club president Shannon Finley, a past CWL affiliate governor and a shareholder with Pettit Kohn Ingrassia Lutz & Dolin, who focuses on employment litigation and counseling.

"We're having a panel that will talk about strategies to help you negotiate your pay," Finley said. "The purpose of Equal Pay Day events is to educate people that there still exists a pay gap that disproportionately impacts women, but especially women of color. We hope to give women and attendees the skills to help combat the pay gap."

The Orange County Women Lawyers Association has sponsored Equal Pay Day programs since 2017, when CWL Governor at Large Michelle Philo, a past president of OCWLA, organized the group's first Equal Pay Day luncheon.

Philo said OCWLA's Equal Pay Day programs have featured speakers addressing compensation issues from various points of view and have addressed equal pay issues in the news, such as the U.S. Women's Soccer Team pay negotiations. One year, a panel discussed best practices for law firm compliance with the California Equal Pay Act and the state's salary history ban. At another event, a panel of in-house lawyers focused on salary negotiations and how to best highlight career achievements during a negotiation.

"Until Equal Pay Day falls on December 31, meaning all women are earning equally as their male counterparts, we need to continue to advocate for equal pay," Philo said. "Having an annual event that reminds us of the inequity allows us to identify pay disparity and advocate for change."

Since 2017, OCWLA has held an annual Equal Pay Event as a continuing education program. The program aims to fall on Equal Pay Day, or as close thereto, and members and guests are invited to wear red for the annual event. The topics surrounding Equal Pay Day are numerous and OCWLA has used this opportunity to invite a variety of speakers to discuss compensation from various points of view. One year a panel discussed the California Equal Pay Act and California's Salary History Ban and best practices for applying those laws in firm practice. Another year focused on a panel of in-house lawyers and focused on salary negotiations and how to best highlight career achievements during a negotiation. Some years will focus on implicit bias and its effect on pay while others will focus on recent newsworthy topics such as the US Women's Soccer pay negotiations.



Jodi Cleesattle is President-Elect of California Women Lawyers and is a Supervising Deputy Attorney General with the California Department of Justice in San Diego.

# Membership Committee Hosts Events, Kicks Off Book Club

BY MICHELLE PHILO

CWL's Membership Committee is focused on membership growth, retention, and engagement. With a large task for a statewide organization, this year's committee is taking small steps to address each goal.

The Membership Committee started the year hosting CWL's Galentine's Day event, recognizing the organization's founding mothers, past presidents, and lifetime members. The virtual program, which was open to all CWL members, was held Feb. 28. Attendees received customized packages in advance of the event, including a custom CWL bingo card, mini champagne bottles, a variety of chocolates, scented lotions, Galentine's decor, heart-shaped glasses, and other Valentine's Day-themed treats. During the event, members chatted, played bingo, and shared stories.

The committee will kick off a virtual book club in April, with the theme, "Books by Women Lawyers." This will not be your average book club; during each session, members will be joined by the authors of the books being discussed. The book club will read fiction and non-fiction works, and the first selection is the recently published, "Her Honor: Stories of Challenge and Triumph from Women Judges," edited by Lauren Stiller Rikleen.

Rikleen, a long-time environmental lawyer and now president of the Rikleen Institute for Strategic Leadership in Wayland, Mass., has authored several books including "Ending the Gauntlet: Removing Barriers to Women's Success in the Law," "You Raised Us, Now Work With Us: Millennials, Career Success, and Building Strong Workplace Teams," and "Ladder Down: Success Strategies for Lawyers from Women Who Will Be Hiring, Reviewing, and Promoting You." She was awarded the American Bar Association's Margaret Brent Women Lawyer of Achievement Award in 2017.

"Her Honor" features essays from 25 judges from all levels of the state and federal courts, including Chief Judges and two Supreme Court Justices, with each author sharing nuanced stories of challenges and successes, including the inequality, bias, and other barriers they overcame.

Watch your email and the CWL website for information on how to register for the members-only CWL Book Club. If you or someone you know has authored a book that you would like featured in this series, contact the Membership Committee at [membership@cwlorg](mailto:membership@cwlorg).

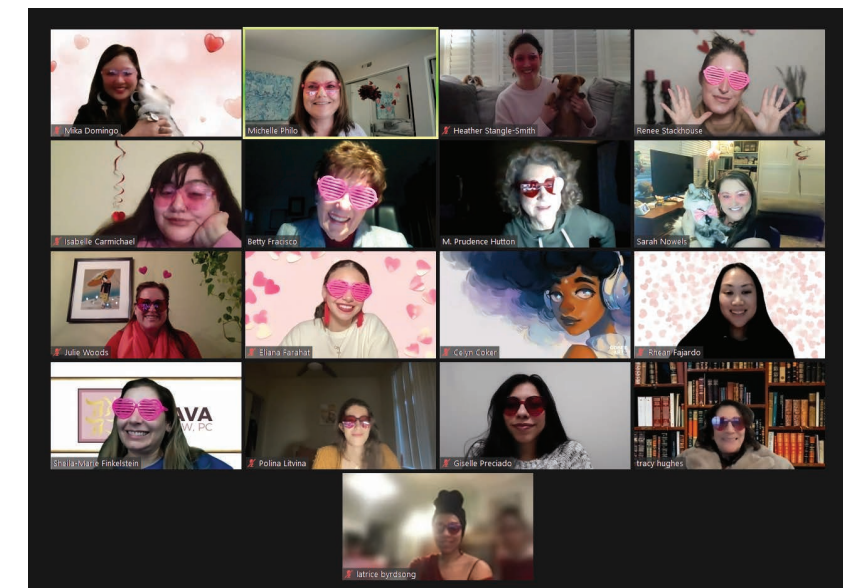
The Membership Committee also seeks liaisons from the law schools to serve on the committee and assist in membership recruitment of law students, who receive free memberships to CWL.

While membership growth is critical to every bar association, the focus on current members is equally important. The Membership Committee aims to offer a token of appreciation to recognize members at each of its in-person events.

If you are interested in serving on the Membership Committee, do not hesitate to contact us at [membership@cwlorg](mailto:membership@cwlorg).



Michelle Philo is a CWL Governor at Large and chair of the Membership Committee. She is the founder of Philo Law Firm, P.C., in Irvine, where she serves as general counsel for small businesses and start-ups and also provides estate planning and probate services.



Galentines's Day - February 28, 2023

# CWL Joins Amicus Briefs Supporting LGBTQ+ Rights

BY JODI CLEESATTLE



California Women Lawyers joined two briefs supporting LGBTQ+ rights in late November, one addressing employment discrimination and one challenging a ban on transgender girls playing on girls' school sports teams.

## Billard v. Charlotte Catholic High School

CWL joined a [brief](#) filed Nov. 30 in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit in *Billard v. Charlotte Catholic High School*, Case No. 22-1440. The brief, filed by the National Women's Law Center (NWLC), was filed in support of Lonnie Billard, a drama teacher at Charlotte Catholic High School who was fired after he announced on Facebook he was marrying his long-time partner.

The school district had stipulated that Billard was not a minister for purposes of the "ministerial exception," which shields religious institutions from certain employment law claims based on the First Amendment right of churches to decide matters of faith and doctrine without government intrusion. But the school district asserted that it was free to discriminate against LGBTQ+ employees based on a statutory exception to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, allowing religious employers to discriminate based on religion; the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993; a general right to religious autonomy; and the right to freedom of association. Billard, represented by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), won summary judgment in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of North Carolina, and the school district appealed.

The amicus brief highlighted the leading relevant precedents in the Fourth Circuit and other courts that established that religious schools could not pay married women less than married men based on the religious belief that men should be head of household. The brief explained the harms that would result if the defendants' arguments were accepted, and religious employers were given a statutory or constitutional right to engage in sex discrimination whenever they were religiously motivated to do so.

The case is tentatively scheduled for oral argument in early May.

## AM v. Indianapolis Public Schools

CWL joined a [brief](#) filed Nov. 10 in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit in *AM v. Indianapolis Public Schools*, Case No. 22-2332. The NWLC and amici filed the brief in support of a 10-year-old transgender girl who was kicked off her elementary school softball team after a sports ban targeting transgender girls and young women took effect in Indiana in the summer of 2022. The girl and her family, represented by the ACLU, won a preliminary injunction finding the anti-trans ban on sports participation likely violates Title IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, especially given the Supreme Court's 2020 *Bostock* decision, which held that Title VII protects employees against discrimination because they are gay or transgender. The State of Indiana appealed the preliminary injunction.

The amicus brief highlighted how inclusive school policies – like the local Indianapolis policy displaced by the anti-trans statewide ban – are consistent with Title IX and a key part of creating gender equity in education. The brief argued that the inequities girls face in K-12 sports are not due to inclusion of transgender girls and women. Rather, rules targeting some girls because they are not "feminine enough" perpetuate sexist and racist stereotypes that harm all girls, especially girls of color.

After transferring to a charter school, Plaintiff dismissed her lawsuit as moot Jan. 18. The parties filed a stipulation of dismissal of the appeal, and the Seventh Circuit entered an order of dismissal Jan. 19. The dismissal resulted in the lifting of the preliminary injunction, allowing Indiana's ban on transgender girls on girls' school sports teams to go into effect.

## Adams v. School Board of St. Johns County, Florida

An anti-transgender ruling was issued in December in a case in which CWL had joined in filing two amicus briefs. On Dec. 30, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit issued a 7-4 [en banc opinion](#) in *Adams v. School Board of St. Johns County, Florida*, Case No. 18-13592, finding that a school district policy barring transgender students from using bathrooms aligned with their gender identity did not violate equal protection or the Title IX prohibition on discrimination.

*Continues on page 36*

CWL had joined an amicus brief by NWLC and Lambda Legal in November 2021 in the en banc proceeding. The brief was filed in support of a transgender male student who was denied access to the boys' restroom at his middle school in Florida. CWL previously joined NWLC in an amicus brief filed in the case in March 2019, and received an Eleventh Circuit decision in the student's favor in August 2020, holding that the school board's policy of prohibiting trans students from using restrooms corresponding to their gender identity violated the Equal Protection Clause and Title IX. The Eleventh Circuit then vacated its decision and decided to hear the case en banc.

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@cw.org](mailto:amicus@cw.org).



*Jodi Cleesattle is CWL's 2023 President-Elect, District 9 Governor, and chair of CWL's Amicus Committee. She is a Supervising Deputy Attorney General for the California Department of Justice, where she works in the Employment and Administrative Mandate Section in San Diego.*



## CWL In-House Counsel Network is Back!

BY LATRICE BYRDSONG AND NATALIE GARCIA LASHINSKY

CWL's In-House Counsel Network (IHCN) is here to support and engage our members who work in-house.

Through our events, we hope to facilitate the sharing of ideas and experiences unique to members of corporate counsel departments across a variety of issues facing women attorneys. We also want to provide a support network among our in-house counsel members through some lively in-person gatherings.

This year, IHCN will work to bring together in-house counsel from across the state and industries to build relationships. We are focused on delivering virtual and in-person programming focused on professional development, networking, and sharing of experiences. We will also offer opportunities for outside counsel to engage with IHCN for business development and referrals.

### How Can You Join the Fun?

#### Watch for and complete our IHCN Survey!

IHCN will launch a survey in March to assess its members' opinions on topics relevant to their practice, and the best times to get together. So, please take a minute to complete the survey when it comes. We want your input as we plan our events for the year.

#### Identify your CWL membership as part of the IHCN!

If you have not already done so, log in to your CWL account at [www.cwl.org](http://www.cwl.org). Click 'My Member Profile' under the Membership tab. Then click 'Edit Profile,' and scroll down to the 'IHC' and select 'Yes' from the drop-down menu. Then click 'Save Profile,' and you are all done. This quick and easy step will help us keep you informed with targeted communications about upcoming IHCN events.

#### Plan to attend IHCN's Networking Events and Virtual Panels!

- IHCN will host its first in-person networking event in San Francisco in the spring! Attendance for CWL IHCN members will be complimentary. For sponsorship information for our Northern California event, please contact IHCN Committee Co-Chair Natalie Garcia Lashinsky via email at [natalie.lashinsky@huschblackwell.com](mailto:natalie.lashinsky@huschblackwell.com).

- In the summer, IHCN will present a virtual panel discussion featuring IHCN members, covering hot topics of interest to our members.
- In the fall, IHCN will gather for another in-person networking event in the Los Angeles area. Attendance for CWL IHCN members will again be complimentary. For sponsorship information for our Southern California event, please contact IHCN Committee Co-Chair Latrice Byrdsong via email at [latricebyrdsong@gmail.com](mailto:latricebyrdsong@gmail.com).

Details on the specific dates and locations of our in-person networking events and virtual panel topic will be coming soon, so stay tuned!



*Latrice Byrdsong is a CWL District 7 Governor and an employee benefits and executive compensation specialist with Axiom Law in Los Angeles.*



*Natalie Garcia Lashinsky is a CWL Governor at Large and a partner at Husch Blackwell LLP, where she is based in the firm's virtual office, The Link.*

*Byrdsong and Lashinsky co-chair CWL's In-House Council Network Committee.*



## CWL Upcoming Events



- |                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| March 16<br>1:00pm - 4:00pm   | <b><u>So, You Want To Be A Judge?™</u></b><br><i>A Virtual Program</i>   |
| April 10<br>10:00am - 10:30am | <b><u>Coffee and Connect</u></b><br><i>A CWL at Home Virtual Program</i>   |
| April 17                      | <b><u>CWL Book Club</u></b><br><i>A Virtual Program</i>  |
| April 20                      | <b><u>How Individual Differences and Demeanor Impact Jury and Bench Verdicts</u></b><br><i>A Virtual Program</i> |
| May 4<br>5:30pm - 7:30pm      | <b><u>CWL In-House Counsel Network's Networking Mixer</u></b><br><i>San Francisco Bay Area</i>                   |
| May 8<br>10:00am - 10:30am    | <b><u>Coffee and Connect</u></b><br><i>A CWL at Home Virtual Program</i>   |
| May 19                        | <b><u>2023 Annual Conference</u></b><br><i>Costa Mesa, California</i>  |
| June 12<br>10:00am - 10:30am  | <b><u>Coffee and Connect</u></b><br><i>A CWL at Home Virtual Program</i>   |
| September 21                  | <b><u>Annual Dinner</u></b><br><i>San Diego Marriott Marquis</i>   |

# BE PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER



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

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- Orange County Women Lawyers
- San Mateo Women Lawyers
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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.

### MEET LOUINDA LACEY, CWL'S LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE CHAIR



**Introduction:** Louinda Lacey, Legislative Committee Chair, is a member of the California Chamber of Commerce (CCC) and a member of the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW). She is also a member of the California State Bar Association and the California State Bar Association's Women's Section. She is currently serving as the Legislative Committee Chair for the California Women Lawyers Association (CWL).

Ms. Lacey is the recipient of many awards for her service to the profession and the community. She is a past president of the California State Bar Association and the California State Bar Association's Women's Section. She is also a past president of the California Chamber of Commerce and the National Council of Jewish Women. She is currently serving as the Legislative Committee Chair for the California Women Lawyers Association (CWL).

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