

# Tanya A. Bovée Receives Ladder Award



CBA President William H. Clendenen, Jr., award winner Tanya Bovée, and CBA President elect Karen DeMeola.

The Women in the Law Section of the Connecticut Bar Association (CBA), in association with the Young Lawyers Section (YLS), honored Attorney Tanya A. Bovée of Jackson Lewis PC as the 2016 recipient of the Ladder Award. She was presented with the award at the “Pathways to Leadership for Women Lawyers” on March 24 at Grassy Hill Country Club in Orange.

The Ladder Award was created by the YLS Women in the Law Committee in 2007 to honor a woman attorney who has “left the ladder down” for other women to follow in her footsteps. The award is aimed at honoring the efforts of women in the profession who have recognized the importance of mentoring and supporting more junior lawyers in their own journeys to success in the profession. Past recipients of this award include The Honorable Anne C. Dranginis and Rosemary E. Giuliano.

CBA Women in the Law Section Chair Carmina Tessitore welcomed attendees to the inspiring event. She thanked all the firms who have taken the Best Practices for Gender Equality Pledge and noted that, despite efforts of women to promote gender equality, such as with the right to vote, “the *ABA Journal* reports the staggering statistic that the median pay for full time female lawyers is 77.4 percent that of their male counterparts....That means our mothers, aunts, sisters, daughters, friends are earning less for the same work.”

Keynote speaker Catherine Bailey, legal and public policy director at Connecticut Women’s Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF), relayed her passion for activism and the F-word: feminism. She noted that although much has been accomplished,

such as the 1974 Equal Credit Opportunity Act or the first female supreme court justice appointed in 1981, we still need the F-word for future accomplishments.

Judge Nina F. Elgo introduced Attorney Bovée; the pair share a special bond as Judge Elgo officiated the award winner’s wedding.

Attorney Bovée shared her experiences as a female attorney of color and the lessons she learned along the way that have most impacted her career. She admonished that “Connecticut is a small community where everyone knows everyone. It becomes all the more critical to avoid burning bridges. Your adversary today may become a potential client five years from now.” She also stressed the importance of mentorship. She noted that “Your mentors and advocates most likely will not look like you,” as the majority of equity partners are white males. It is more important to find “...a true mentor, someone who you absolutely trust who will help you think

through decisions and determine what is best for you even if it does not benefit him or her.”

Reflecting on her move to Jackson Lewis 12 years prior, she stated that it was a former colleague who suggested the position. “If Carlton [Chen] had not sent me the job opening and then strongly encouraged me to apply, I would not have applied. So the lesson? Listen to your friends. Be brave. Say yes. Try different things.” In her overall message of the night, Attorney Bovée relayed, “The ladder represents a symbol of opportunity. It is a reminder of how far we can go and how much a helping hand or even a word of encouragement can make a difference in whether we reach for opportunity. I am so honored to receive this award.”

To view a copy of the Best Practices for Gender Equity Pledge and find out how your firm can join in support of the pledge, visit [ctbar.org/WILSBestPractices](http://ctbar.org/WILSBestPractices). **CL**



Award winner Tanya Bovée with her fellow colleagues from the Connecticut Asian Pacific American Bar Association (CAPABA).



Members of the Young Lawyers Section and Women in the Law Section who helped organize this event with award winner Tonya Bovée.