

Welcome to 16-17 President Connie Armstrong



Table of Contents

- 02 From the President
- 04 Mentors and Opportunities: My Path to the Bench
- 05 Moving Forward: Promoting Diversity in the Profession
- 06 A Journey Through the Judicial Elections and Appointments Process
- 07 Lessons from a Judicial Career: A Profile of Judge Ann D. Montgomery
- 08 The 2016 Rosalie Wahl Leadership Lecture
- 11 MWL Member Spotlight: Ellen Ahrens
- 13 100% Club Spotlight: Larkin Hoffman
- 14 Members on the Move
- 17 MWL Board of Directors Adopts Diversity & Inclusion Statement
- 18 MWL Committee Fair & Summer Social / Opportunities to Get Involved



In This Issue:
Women & the
Judiciary

From the President



Sharing Our Stories in the Year Ahead

By Connie Armstrong
2016-2017 MWL President

“Leadership is not about titles, positions or flow-charts. It is about one life influencing another.”

-John C. Maxwell

As attorneys one aspect of our jobs is often to influence other people; whether it be our clients, judges, opposing counsel or others. However, I doubt many of us realize that, without even trying, we have also likely positively influenced someone else.

Leadership is one of Minnesota Women Lawyers’ core values with its focus on developing women lawyers into leaders. This is a goal where each of us can make a difference by simply being willing to use the lessons and experiences of our lives to influence another woman. As ambassadors for Minnesota Women Lawyers, I encourage each of you to make a concerted effort share your story. This is one way we relate to one another and build lasting connections. The value in sharing is the realiza-

tion that your story can not only positively influence someone else but it may also help you to find your own voice.

One of the benefits Minnesota Women Lawyers offers its members is the various opportunities to meet and establish relationships with many accomplished and wonderful women. And what makes Minnesota Women Lawyers such a success is the willingness of its members to give of themselves for the benefit of others. To continue to advance the mission of Minnesota Women Lawyers, I encourage each of you to step forward as a leader and share your story to positively influence someone else toward leadership.

Consistent with the focus of this issue – Women and the Judiciary – one of the recognized leadership positions within the legal profession is that of a judge and several women in judicial positions have graciously agreed to share their stories to influence others that may be interested in pursuing similar positions.

Over the last few months I have had the opportunity to attend swearing-in ceremonies for three women to various judicial positions

in Minnesota – Justice Margaret Chutich to the Minnesota Supreme Court, Judge Diane Bratvold to Court of Appeals and Judge Bridgid Dowdal as a District Court Judge in the Tenth Judicial District.

This is not an anomaly anymore, recent statistics show that 39 percent of the state’s judicial positions are held by women and approximately 48 percent of Governor Mark Dayton’s district court judicial appointments have been women. Additionally, with the recent confirmation of former Minnesota Supreme Court Justice Wilhelmina Wright to the federal bench in Minnesota, 1/3 of federal district judges in the state are now women. While these numbers are encouraging, we cannot forget how far the women of our judiciary have come and we must continue to reinforce and encourage women seeking judicial positions.

The governor and the Commission on Judicial Selection seek to further promote the cultural, racial and gender diversity of the state’s future judicial applicants and appointees. To facilitate their efforts and encourage continuous support, they hosted a reception for members of the judiciary and leaders of Minnesota’s affinity bar

About Connie

Connie Armstrong is a litigation attorney who counsels and defends businesses, contractors and employers in contract, construction and employment matters. Connie’s first priority is understanding her clients’ business and objectives, she enjoys strategizing with clients and the challenge of working collaboratively to achieve successful results. Connie is a shareholder at Lind, Jensen, Sullivan & Peterson, P.A. and a member of the Minnesota Air National Guard, currently assigned as the Deputy Mission Support Group Commander at the 148th Fighter Wing in Duluth.

Connie has been a member of the Air National Guard since high school and, prior to earning her law degree from William Mitchell College of Law in 2006, received an undergraduate degree from the University of Alaska – Southeast and a graduate degree from the University of La Verne while employed with the Alaska Air National Guard.

Connie has been an active member of Minnesota Women Lawyers, first serving as the treasurer for the St. Croix Valley Chapter and on the Board of Directors since 2011. She has also been actively involved with the Minnesota Defense Lawyer’s Association for several years, speaking at its events and serving on its committees.

organizations to underscore the importance of encouraging and preparing qualified, diverse candidates to achieve a more representative judiciary.

The process for judicial appointment is competitive. Minnesota Women Lawyers, as do other Minnesota affinity bar organizations, offers various resources to attorneys with aspirations for judicial positions. Besides publicizing judicial vacancies on Minnesota Women Lawyers’ Facebook page and website, insights and experiences on the application and interview processes are collected from prior candidates and judicial appointees to assist our other members going through these processes in the future.

Additionally, members of Minnesota Women Lawyers can attend “You Can Be a Judge” seminars to hear the personal stories of recently appointed judges and learn about the appointment process from members of the Commission and staff from the governor’s office– including suggestions for interested candidates. Aside from possible anxiety over the various interviews; requesting letters of recommendation, knowing who to ask for recommendations

and what aspects of your personal and professional life to share as part of the application are some of the challenging decisions that are part of the process. Minnesota Women Lawyers offers assistance to its members by reviewing and offering feedback on the written application package documents prior to being submitted for consideration by the Commission and conducting mock interviews before applicants meet with the Commission or the governor. Finally, drawing from its pool of well-qualified members, Minnesota Women Lawyers continues to recruit women for judicial positions that advance its mission of increasing the overall diversity of the bench in Minnesota.

During my term as President of Minnesota Women Lawyers, I ask each of you to share your story to encourage continued leadership and I welcome interactive discussions, including affinity bar members and the judiciary, on ways to continue to diversify and improve the overall success of our judiciary. ■

2016-2017 MWL Board of Directors

President

Connie Armstrong,
Lind, Jensen, Sullivan & Peterson, P.A.

President-Elect

Kendra Brodin, Merchant & Gould

Secretary

Breia Schleuss, Faegre Baker Daniels

Treasurer

Shannon Harmon, Internal Revenue Service

Past-President

Bridget Nason, LeVander, Gillen & Miller, PA

Board Members

Susan Gallagher, Gallagher Law Office, LLC

Michelle Grant, Dorsey & Whitney LLP

Kristin Haugen, KC Haugen Law

Veena Iyer, Nilan Johnson Lewis

Michelle Looby, Gustafson Gluek

Brooke Nelson, Bernick Lifson, P.A.

Jennifer Robbins, Robins Kaplan LLP

Sarah Rohne,
University of Minnesota Law School

Mary Szondy, Attorney at Law

Amy Taber, Prime Therapeutics

Chapter Liaisons

Central Chapter
To be announced

Northeastern Chapter
Jocelyn Bremer, Hanft Fride

South Central Chapter
Meghan Maes, SMRLS

St. Croix Valley Chapter
Amy Schmidt, City of Bloomington

Student Liaisons from Minnesota’s three law schools will be announced shortly.

Staff

Debra Pexa, Executive Director

Hannah Zuercher,
Membership and Communications Coordinator



Magistrate Judge Hildy Bowbeer was appointed to the bench in June 2014. She began her legal career as a trial and appellate lawyer in private practice specializing in products liability litigation, and then joined 3M Company's Legal Affairs department, where she managed products liability and intellectual property litigation.

The story of my "path to the bench" has been one of family, friends, colleagues, and clients—both women and men—who supported, encouraged, and mentored me. It has also been one of opportunities to take what I've learned and apply it to serve clients, and now the public, in new settings.

When I started law school in 1976, I knew I wanted to be a litigator but I could not have told you why, other than that I loved high school debate and, yes, grew up on Perry Mason. By the end of my first-year torts class in law school, however, I discovered an abiding interest in products liability litigation. It caught my attention for several reasons. For one, both my parents were college-educated in the sciences, and I had been raised to be comfortable with technical material. (How many other seven-year-old girls in 1964 got a custom-assembled chemistry set for their birthday?) My mother and father instilled in me not only an interest, but the confidence that I could understand mathematical and scientific concepts as readily as the next person. At the same time, they taught me to be humble enough to own up to what I did not understand, and to seek help from smarter, more knowledgeable people who could teach me. Thus, the opportunity to work on products liability cases with people who would teach me about engineering, physics, chemistry, or medicine, was tantalizing.

I was also intrigued by the public policy issues presented by products liability, particularly the

Mentors and Opportunities: A Path to the Bench

By Magistrate Judge Hildy Bowbeer

effort to strike the right balance between the responsibilities and expectations of the product designer and manufacturer, on the one hand, and the responsibilities and expectations of the product user, on the other. The law was being written in the courts, real time. It seemed to me that any case—perhaps a case I might work on myself—could give rise to a new standard or even a new theory of liability.

So when I joined the Gray Plant Mooty law firm after a Minnesota Supreme Court clerkship, I told Dick Bowman I wanted to do products liability litigation. It was, as it turned out, a lucky choice for a young woman litigator in 1980. Less than a year later, I was second-chairing my first products liability trial in Carson City, Nevada. My clients and colleagues, first at Gray Plant Mooty and then at Bowman and Brooke, afforded me every opportunity and all the support I could have wished for to grow as a trial lawyer in what up to then had been, for the most part, a man's world. I got to try cases and argue appeals all over the country, and if occasionally I ran into some challenges because of my gender, it was never at the hands of my colleagues or clients.

As strange as it sounds, I also became interested in how discovery worked and in helping my clients get it right, both in process and in substance. I was there as the practice evolved from giant productions of paper files to giant productions of printed-out electronic files to giant productions of the electronic files themselves.

In 1997, I joined 3M Company and had the opportunity to learn firsthand about the big picture considerations that inform a client's perception of and approach to litigation. I learned more about how to view the costs, risks, and benefits of litigation in the larger context of the client's—not the lawyer's—goals and objectives, which are often much more complex than just the outcome of the particular case.

Four years later, 3M gave me the opportunity to take my product liability litigation skills and see if they would transfer to intellectual property litigation. I knew virtually nothing about intellectual property, but this was a chance to get out of my comfort zone and learn something new. In addition to learning the substance of the law underlying IP litigation,

I learned about negotiating resolutions. I got to see great mediators in action, including some on the bench right here in this district. I learned from perceptive business leaders the value of not just any agreement, but a truly durable agreement.

My move into IP litigation also changed the course of my career in another, less obvious way: it brought my first concentrated experience before the federal district court here in Minnesota, the court on which I am now proud to serve. At about the same time, my dear friend (and walking partner) Susan Richard Nelson became Magistrate Judge Susan Richard Nelson (and to my good fortune, remained my dear friend and walking partner). Several years later, Jeffrey Keyes, who had hired me for my first summer associate job at Gray Plant Mooty, also became a magistrate judge. Thus, both through my 3M experience and through my conversations with Judge Nelson and Judge Keyes, I came to appreciate and understand the intricacy and the opportunities of the magistrate judge's role in civil case management and resolution.

All of those experiences, and all of those colleagues and friends who offered their insights along the way, led me here, where I have been fortunate, once again, to have the chance to get out of my comfort zone, take what I've learned, and see if I can be of service in a new setting.

Fortunately, the mentorship continues. My fellow judges are unfailingly generous with their wisdom, their time, and their experience. So are the talented lawyers who appear in front of me, and the chambers staff who has my back. With them around me, I know that my path on the bench will be paved with the same support and mentorship that paved my path to the bench. ■



M. Jacqueline Regis is a Hennepin County District Judge and served as President of Minnesota Women Lawyers for the 2000-2001 term.

"We must not, in trying to think about how we can make a big difference, ignore the small daily differences we can make which, over time, add up to big differences that we often cannot foresee."

-Marian Wright Edelman

The American Bar Association's fall 2015 issue of *The Judges' Journal* identifies implicit bias as one of the impediments to diversity and inclusion within the profession. The very definition of the qualifying word *implicit* suggests that dismantling this form of bias will require long, hard, and persistent work. Marian Edelman's words are reminders that, however daunting the task may be, small consistent steps forward can make a big difference.

Organizations like the Minnesota Women Lawyers (MWL) are no strangers to making "a big difference" with "small daily differences" to shatter the barriers that preclude women attorneys' full and meaningful participation in the profession. In the coming year, MWL will expand its mission to promote diversity. Its renewed focus arises from reported data showing that, despite good intentions, *implicit bias* has undermined meaningful progress toward diversity in the profession.

Over the last several decades, much has been written about "making the case" for diversity. Recently, in response to the question whether

Moving Forward: Promoting Diversity in the Profession

By Judge M. Jacqueline Regis

there are any practical or specific benefits to having diversity in the legal profession, Paulette Brown, the first African-American woman to lead the American Bar Association, summarized one aspect of the case for diversity as follows: "One of the big benefits is the diversity of opinion and thought. When you have a diverse group of people—especially when you have people of color, women, and members of LGBT groups—they are able to resolve more complex issues in a way that a homogeneous group is not able to do."² Many other compelling arguments have been advanced.³ During a law school appearance, United States Supreme Court Justice Sotomayor expressed concern about the "danger" of the lack of diversity in the profession and on the bench.⁴ The case for diversity has been made and much effort (including Roderick Palmore's A Call to Action⁵ in 2004 more than twelve years ago) has been exerted in the perennial attempt to address the issue.

Yet, based on a 2013 study conducted by the Microsoft Commission, the diversity gap in the U.S. legal profession persists when compared to other professions.⁶ The tangible results are not visible because, as current research reveals, a powerful yet invisible enemy now called *implicit bias* undermines the good intentions and support for diversity. The 2015 Fall Issue of the American Bar Association *The Judges' Journal*⁷ contains several articles dedicated to the effects of "implicit bias" on diversity initiatives. The August 2015 issue of *Above the Law* contains an article entitled "Implicit Bias: The Silent Killer of Diversity in the Profession."⁸ Sheryl Sandberg in a July 28, 2015 letter states: "One of the most important things we can do to promote diversity in the workplace is to correct the unconscious bias that all of us have."

The broad acknowledgement of the root cause of the apparent failure of so much effort is at some level a hopeful sign. The first step in finding a solution to solve any problem is always an understanding and acknowledgement of the nature and root cause of the problem. Change cannot occur without recognition and acknowledgement of the underlying problem. In that sense with the reported data acknowledging unconscious or *implicit bias* as the culprit, some significant progress has been achieved.

As time goes on and demographics change, the failure to achieve meaningful diversity is indeed a "danger." The lack of diversity in the profes-

sion has far-reaching ripple effects not only in the workplace, but also in the access to, administration and the delivery of justice. The signs of the times point to the need for continued vigilance and meaningful efforts to defeat *implicit bias* that undermines the good intentions to achieve diversity. *Implicit bias*, primarily because of its unconscious nature, is a powerful foe. It will demand a lot of determination and persistence to defeat. Continued leadership in this direction requires the same vigilance and hard work that has taken the profession this far in the meaningful participation of all women.

Many organizations like MWL and their individual members fighting for equality and justice must wage yet another mighty battle to eradicate implicit bias. Fortunately MWL is no stranger to this effort. The efforts of organizations like MWL to combat implicit gender bias has been relentless over the years. Eradicating *implicit bias* in the profession will require the same level of commitment and effort. ■

1. MWL's mission is "to advance the success of women lawyers and strive for a just society."

2. Q & A with ABA President Paulette Brown, January 2016. http://www.americanbar.org/groups/litigation/committees/diversity-inclusion/news_analysis/articles-archives/winter2016/winter2016-0116-interview-with-aba-president-paulette-brown.html

3. Edward M. Chen, *The Judiciary, Diversity, and Justice for all*, 10 Asian Am.L.J. (2003). Available at: <http://scholarship.law.berkeley.edu/aalj/vol10/iss1/11>

4. The Blog of Legal Times: <http://legaltimes.typepad.com/blt/2013/11/sotomayer-says-lack-of-diversity-is-huge-danger-for-judiciary.html>; <http://www.ABAJOURNAL.com/authors/4/>.

5. Roderick Palmore is an attorney and formerly General Mills' General Counsel. A Call to Action: Diversity in the Legal Profession states: "[W]e pledge that we will make decisions regarding which law firms represent our companies based in significant part on the diversity performance of the firms... We further intend to end or limit our relationships with firms whose performance consistently evidences a lack of meaningful interest in being diverse."

6. Microsoft Commission: Raising the Bar: An analysis of African-American and Hispanic/Latino Diversity in the Legal Profession: http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/diversity/Microsoft_Raising_the_Bar_FINAL.ppt (March 3, 2015).

7. American Bar Association's *The Judges' Journal*, A Quarterly Publication of the Judicial Division, Fall 2015 – Vol. 54 No. 4.

8. <http://abovethelaw.com/2015/02/implicit-bias-the-silent-killer-of-diversity-in-the-legal-profession/>



Judge Catherine (Kate) McPherson was appointed to the bench by Governor Dayton in 2011. She graduated *summa cum laude* from William Mitchell College of Law in 1994; her *M.S.W.* from the University of Minnesota in 1990; and *magna cum laude* from the College of St. Thomas. She practiced as an Assistant County Attorney in both Hennepin and Anoka Counties from 1994 to 2011.

As Linda Hirshman states in the subtitle of her book “Sisters in Law,” Justice O’Connor and Justice Ginsburg most certainly have changed the world. But I am a judge at an entirely different level. We sit on the shores of Buffalo Lake in Wright County, dealing with high volume and limited resources yet we do our best to do justice. So how did I get here?

Sometimes students ask me about my major, wanting to know the magic major for becoming a judge. I explain that when I was forced to declare a major, I counted up all the credits I had in various departments and found I could get a double major in Psychology and Spanish. After enduring many jokes from my family about my qualifications to be a Spanish-speaking psychotic, I moved to St. Cloud to work as a full-time live-in volunteer at a Catholic Worker house serving the homeless. Little did I know at the time, but that job probably best prepared me for my current job as a judge. The clientele we served was largely comprised of individuals with mental health issues and chemical dependency problems; too many of them veterans who had served our country but who struggled as a result of their service. The people who appear before me are all too similar – the mentally ill and chemically dependent make up a disproportionate percentage.

After frustration with the inability to truly help the homeless in St. Cloud, I began working at Legal Aid, which ultimately led me down

A Journey Through the Judicial Elections and Appointments Process

By Judge Catherine McPherson

the path to a Master’s degree in Social Work from the University of Minnesota and a J.D. from William Mitchell. One of the many jobs I worked while going to law school was as a victim advocate, which led to a later job as a prosecutor in Hennepin County. When my children were born, I moved closer to home and began working in the Anoka County Attorney’s Office. One day as I was complaining about a judge’s ruling, my boss told me to quit complaining unless I was willing to serve as a judge myself. He was probably trying to just get me out of his office, but I took his admonishment seriously and began to explore the possibility of becoming a judge.

When a seat opened in my home district, I applied. One of my mentors wisely said, “This first go around, you just want to get your application in good shape.” I kept my expectations in check but ended up sitting knee to knee with Governor Pawlenty. I remember thinking, “How the heck did I get here?” and “Why didn’t I wear a longer skirt?!” Not exactly helpful thoughts to have when you are trying to sound professional and judicial! I was a finalist two additional times under Governor Pawlenty but was not appointed. This outcome was not as disappointing as it may sound. Once I was a finalist with the Honorable Tammi Fredrickson, and her interview was immediately prior to mine. It was quite difficult during my interview not to just keep saying, “You really should appoint Tammi – she is amazing!” But Governor Pawlenty knew quality when he saw it, and I am so glad to have Judge Fredrickson on the bench.

So the appointment process wasn’t initially as successful as I’d hoped, but another opportunity arose: Judge Armstrong’s seat opened. This article would be three times as long if I described the interesting twists and turns that surrounded that opening, but suffice it to say, I had to decide in a matter of a few days if I wanted to throw my hat in the ring; and as long as I could get 500 signatures of eligible voters, my name could be on the ballot. My friends and family thought this would be a grand adventure, and we set out to see if we could do it. In less than a week, we did! We had hoped only a couple of people would be successful, but over 20 people had the same idea and made it to the ballot. In one of the top ten Minnesota judicial races, 23 people appeared on the general ballot for one judicial race.

So how do you go about convincing the voters in ten different counties from Cokato to Pine City that you are the most qualified among 23 candidates? I previously thought the merit selection

process was daunting, but for an election I had to learn a whole new language. The language of politics involved yard signs, messages, branding, direct mail campaigns, and door knocking. I remember calling my law school friend Marna and asking her to be campaign manager. Being loyal to a fault, she immediately replied, “I’m in! What do I have to do?” Perhaps the fact that I had no idea should’ve been a clue that we were in over our heads. But we persevered, and we will forever remember the summer of 2010 as the “Kate for Judge” summer.

As we began campaigning in earnest, my dad was one of my most dedicated campaign volunteers, dropping off campaign literature until he couldn’t take another step. My mom was also a fervent supporter and volunteer. When we learned my mom had cancer that summer, I wanted to throw in the towel and give up; she would have none of that. She went to radiation in the morning and returned campaign email inquiries in the afternoon. My friends and family hung out at county fairs and delivered campaign materials to voters’ doorsteps. The first two or three parades were fun, but we soon grew weary. The district was HUGE, and so many things limited my message, including the lack of money. If you really want to get your message out to voters, running for office is incredibly expensive. However, fundraising as a judicial candidate was extremely challenging – especially since I tried to follow all the rules that I could find (and there are a lot)! Just when I thought I had a handle on what the rules were, the 8th circuit issued *RPM v. White*, and we had to re-examine our course again. And did I mention the huge wind storm just before the election that blew down all of the campaign signs? The election was a lot of hard work, but I learned so much. Ordinarily coming in second in an election is NOT a good result but in a field of 23, coming in second was amazing!

The two paths were so different: the merit selection process focused on my qualifications, the election process focused on my ability to achieve name recognition. Suits and legal discussion did not compare to walking two-mile parades in “Kate for Judge” t-shirts when the temperature hit 102.

Ultimately, I was appointed by Governor Dayton through the merit selection process. But tucked away in my garage are hundreds of lawn signs and a box of t-shirts that include one of our slogans: “Vote for Kate (Your Mother Would)!” No matter how tough the path to becoming a judge, I am grateful to serve.■



Judge Montgomery was nominated to be a United States District Judge in November of 1995. She received her undergraduate degree from Kansas University and her law degree from the University of Minnesota. She is the recipient of the Minnesota Women Lawyers 2000 Myra Bradwell Award, and the 2006 Rosalie Wahl Award of Judicial Excellence.

Litchfield native Judge Ann D. Montgomery graduated from The University of Kansas with a psych major and a teaching degree. She pursued the teaching degree on the recommendation of her parents, who believed a mere liberal arts degree would get her nowhere. Although Judge Montgomery enjoyed student teaching, she took her parents advice one step further and enrolled in law school at the University of Minnesota. It was a natural decision given that her father and brother were both attorneys.

In law school, Judge Montgomery’s first-year class only had roughly 20 women, but she could already see the exponential rise of women in the practice of law; the 2Ls ahead of her had about ten women, and the 3Ls had only five or six.

Judge Montgomery’s path to the bench included an 18-month clerkship with the District of Columbia Court of Appeals (with Judges Reilly and Pair), and an eight-year career with the U.S. Attorney’s Office. During her tenure as a prosecutor, Governor Wendell Anderson resigned, and Lieutenant Governor Rudy Perpich stepped in.

Governor Perpich, a product of the Iron Range, did not know many attorneys. He had been a dentist before entering politics. What he did know was that he wanted to appoint judges who grew up in small towns, and who had well-honed senses of justice and good common sense. The governor’s advisors suggested he look for attorneys with trial experience because they believed good trial judges came from good trial attorneys.

On top of these factors, there was a call for greater gender diversity on the Minnesota bench. In 1983, the whole court system was still notably male– not just the judges, but the court reporters and deputy clerks as well. Judge

Lessons from a Judicial Career: A Profile of Judge Ann D. Montgomery

By Anne Greenwood Brown

Montgomery remembers a day when she and attorney Kathleen Graham were in court, representing two litigants. It was such an unusual occurrence for there to be two female attorneys in the courtroom at the same time that the judge declared it must be “Ladies’ Day.”

Governor Perpich was no stranger to promoting gender equality. In the 1950s, he made national news as a Hibbing School Board member by instituting a policy to pay male and female teachers equally. Therefore, when it came time for him to appoint a new judge to the Hennepin County Municipal Court, Judge Montgomery fit the qualifications of his ideal candidate: she was from Small Town, Minnesota; she had eight years’ experience as a federal prosecutor and 30 jury trials under her belt; and she was a woman. She was only 34 years old when she first donned the black robe–a notable standout on the white-haired bench.

Still, Judge Montgomery’s young age did not hold her back, and her good reputation grew. She was elevated to the Hennepin County District Court only 18 months after her first appointment. She became a federal magistrate approximately eight years later, in 1994, and was then nominated by President Bill Clinton to a vacated seat on the U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota. She was confirmed in 1996.

In her 33 years serving on four different courts, Judge Montgomery has seen many changes. Of course the most notable, she says, is the number of women practicing law. The second is the rise of technology. She recalls that in the late 70s, her mentors warned her and other female attorneys not to do their own typing. The fear was that if a female attorney was seen typing, she would be confused with secretarial staff and only used as such. The fear was so ingrained that when Hennepin County purchased computers for its judges, Judge Montgomery was loath to have one on her desk. Now, she says, she, like everyone else, is looking at a screen all day long. “Not only do I navigate the Case Management/Electronic Case Files system, but I Instagram and use emoji’s.”

With the computer have come many “wonderful advancements” such as e-filing, but Judge Montgomery has also seen communication falter with the use of technology. She recalls that when attorneys sent more letters, they took the time to make sure they imparted the right tone. Email is so quick that people can come off as “unintentionally abrasive.” She finds she

has been guilty of this herself with inter-office email, so now she makes the effort to walk down to the clerk’s office to have more face-to-face communications, rather than sending a quick email. (Plus, it helps her reach her daily Fitbit five-mile goal.)

When asked if she is nostalgic for anything, Judge Montgomery says she misses the small-town feel that the Minnesota legal community used to have. “Back then, we knew most everyone by name. We socialized. Now there are just so many lawyers. I miss really knowing the attorneys who come into my courtroom.”

Perhaps that is the lesson this attorney takes from her visit with Judge Montgomery: It is important to communicate with colleagues more purposefully, face-to-face when possible, and to cultivate a legal community made up of real people rather than just letterheads and legal briefs (Which, by the way, Judge Montgomery says could stand to be a whole lot briefer). ■



Anne Greenwood Brown practices Employment and Personal Injury law with Sjoberg & Tebelius, P.A. in Woodbury, Minnesota.

The 2016 MWL Rosalie Wahl Leadership Lecture



Patricia Gillette

Minnesota Women Lawyers (MWL) is pleased to announce the 2016 MWL Rosalie Wahl Leadership Lecture to be held on the evening of Monday, November 14th, 2016 at the Marriott City Center in downtown Minneapolis. The general reception will begin at 5:00 p.m. Dinner will begin at 6:00 p.m., with the program at approximately 6:30 p.m.

MWL is honored to welcome Patricia Gillette as our Wahl Lecture keynote speaker. Ms. Gillette, a partner and member of the employment law group at the law firm of Orrick Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP in San Francisco, is one of the country's leading experts and most sought after speakers on gender diversity and equality.

Her presentation is entitled "Access and Allies: Working Together to Advance Women Attorneys."

A silent auction to benefit the MWL Foundation's Law Student Scholarship Fund will be featured at the Wahl Lecture. Donations to the silent auction are welcomed. Further details will be available shortly.

Table sponsorship opportunities are also available for the Rosalie Wahl Leadership Lecture. Details are available at www.mwlawyers.org.

About Patricia Gillette

Patricia Gillette is one of the country's leading experts and most sought after speakers on gender diversity and equality. A top rated trial lawyer for 40 years as well as a major rainmaker in her firms, Ms. Gillette's career has focused on solving the most critical business issues of Fortune 500 clients.

In her writings and presentations, Ms. Gillette focuses on how to succeed in the high powered, fast paced business environment of today. Relying on research studies she commissioned as well as her charismatic style, Ms. Gillette is particularly able to inspire women to think positively and practically about how they can realize their personal and business goals.

In recognition of her work to advance women in the profession, she has received several awards including the ABA Golden Hammer Award, the California Women Lawyers Association's Fay Stender Award, the Transformational Leadership Award as one of the Top Women Rainmaker, and the Barristers Association of San Francisco Award of Merit.

Ms. Gillette is the co-founder of the Opt-In Project, a nationwide initiative focused on changing the structure of law firms to increase the retention and advancement of women. Ms. Gillette has been a Commissioner on the ABA Commission on Women in the Profession, the ABA's Gender Equity Task Force, Co-Chair of the BASF No Glass Ceiling Initiative, and she serves on non-profit boards, including Direct Women, which is dedicated to placing women attorneys on boards of public companies.

Ms. Gillette is the proud mother of two successful and enlightened sons and lives in Kensington, California with her husband of 42 years. She is an elected official of her town and active in community organizations and activities.

The Rosalie Wahl Leadership Lecture was established on the occasion of Justice Wahl's retirement from the Minnesota Supreme Court. The goal of the lecture series is to honor Justice Wahl, by recognizing women leaders who have broken ground, while pointing the way for women who will follow. The series continues to feature women whose decisions and abilities inspire the leaders of tomorrow, just as Justice Wahl had inspired so many of us.

Women & Rainmaking: Born or Bred?

Date: Tuesday, November 15, 2016
Time: 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.
Location: Faegre Baker Daniels LLP

After her Wahl Lecture keynote remarks on 11/14, MWL is pleased to again welcome Patricia Gillette for a second presentation on 11/15 entitled "Women & Rainmaking: Born or Bred?"

What makes one attorney more successful than another at bringing in business? Are there personal characteristics that impact our ability to deliver new business and if so, can those characteristics be learned? These are the types of questions that were addressed in a ground breaking study initiated by our seminar facilitator Patricia Gillette. She will share the results of the study and then test those results on a panel of lawyers who give out and bring in business. Attendees will leave this presentation with new practical tips on how to approach business development so that their efforts are productive and impactful.

Complete details and registration information will be available in early September at www.mwlawyers.org.

Special thanks to our event host:

FAEGRE BAKER DANIELS



The MWL Foundation ("Foundation") is a 501(c)(3) supporting organization formed by Minnesota Women Lawyers ("MWL") in 2014. The Foundation's mission is to support the charitable activities of MWL and its efforts to advance the success of women attorneys and strive for a just society. In 2015, MWL adopted three core values as part of its 2015-2018 Strategic Planning process – Equity, Leadership, and Community. These core values not only drive the work of MWL, but of the Foundation as well.

While finding its footing as a new organization, the Foundation initially limited its focus to raising funds for its law student scholarship and setting up the Leslie Altman Memorial Scholarship. However, having taken the time to progress at a measured pace, the Foundation is now poised to expand its reach and further advance its mission. This will be accomplished by directly supporting MWL's charitable activities and enhancing its long-term financial stability.

To build a literal "foundation" for MWL, the Foundation Board of Director's will soon be inviting the support of MWL members and the greater legal community in the coming year. To that end, its "Founding Members Campaign" will be formerly launched in conjunction with the upcoming MWL Rosalie Wahl Leadership Lecture on November 14th, 2016. The Founding Members Campaign will provide the vital building blocks on which the Foundation can grow and further support the important mission and charitable work of Minnesota Women Lawyers. Complete details about opportunities to join the Campaign will be announced in the weeks and months ahead.

MWL Chapter News

As a state-wide association, Minnesota Women Lawyers has four affiliated regional chapters in addition to the main office in Minneapolis. Each chapter elects its own leadership and coordinates events and initiatives throughout the year. If you work or reside in a county that is included in one of the four chapters below, you are considered a member of that chapter. Fifty percent of an individual's membership dues are passed directly to the designated chapter to support its activities. Visit the MWL website for the most up-to-date listing of Chapter meetings and events.

The Central Chapter includes MWL members working or living in the counties of Benton, Douglas, Kandiyohi, Meeker, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Pope, Sherburne, Stearns, Todd. The Chapter typically meets on the third Thursday of the month from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. at various venues in the St. Cloud area.

The Northeastern Chapter includes MWL members working or living in the counties of Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Lake, Pine and St. Louis. The Chapter typically meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month, 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Dubh Linn Restaurant in Duluth.

The South Central Chapter includes MWL members working or living in the counties of Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Steele, Waseca and Watonwan. The Chapter typically meets the second Thursday of each month from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Wow Zone in Mankato.

The St. Croix Valley Chapter includes MWL members working or living in Washington and Chisago Counties. The Chapter meets to discuss current legal issues, network, and socialize and hosts volunteer opportunities in the community. Upcoming activities will be announced shortly.

MWL's Upcoming Calendar of Events: At a Glance

Committee Fair and Summer Social
Date: Tuesday, August 23, 2016
Time: 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Location: Briggs and Morgan, P.A., Minneapolis

Knitting Group
Date: Wednesday, September 7, 2016
Time: 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Location: TBA

Book Club
Date: Thursday, September 8, 2016
Time: 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Location: Muffuletta, St. Paul

Solo and Small Firm Practitioner Group
Date: Friday, September 9, 2016
Time: 9:45 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.
Location: 8120 Penn Ave South, Bloomington

Women Attorneys in the News
Date: Monday, September 12, 2016
Time: 4:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Location: Capella Tower Business Center, Mpls.

Professional Parents Affinity Group
Date: Wednesday, September 21, 2016
Time: 12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m.
Location: MWL Office, Minneapolis

Rosalie Wahl Leadership Lecture
Date: Monday, November 14, 2016
Time: 5:00 to 8:30 p.m.
Location: Minneapolis Marriott

Successful Rainmaking for Women Attorneys
Date: Tuesday, November 15, 2016
Time: 8:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
Location: Faegre Baker Daniels LLP, Mpls.

MWL Conference for Women in the Law
Date: Friday, April 21, 2017
Location: Radisson Blu, Minneapolis

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



2015-2016 Fall Mentoring Social and Kickoff

The MWL Equity Committee Presents:

Women Attorneys in the News: Understanding and Engaging with the Media

Date: Monday, September 12th, 2016

Time: 4:15 p.m. Registration
4:30 p.m. Seminar
6:00 p.m. Social Hour

Location: Capella Tower Business Center (225 S 6th Street, Minneapolis)

CLE Credit: 1.5 CLE credit will be applied for.

Registration: MWL Members: FREE
MN Affinity Bar Members: FREE
Non-Members: \$10.00

Registration is required by September 9th. (www.mwlawyers.org)
Early registration is encouraged; space is limited.

The MWL Equity Committee is pleased to present **“Women Attorneys in the News: Understanding and Engaging with the Media.”**

This seminar is designed to support women attorneys in navigating the complicated and sometimes mysterious world of the news media and to position them to become solid and reliable contacts journalists turn to for depth and perspective. The program content will also provide practical tools to assist women attorneys in effectively and strategically communicating their message. Unique ethical issues and conflicts for lawyers interested in engaging with the news media will also be addressed.

MWL is pleased to welcome seminar presenters **Trisha Volpe**, an Emmy-award winning journalist and attorney in the Minneapolis office of Barnes & Thornburg LLP, and **Bob McNaney**, Senior Vice President at PadillaCRT.

Complete details and registration are available at www.mwlawyers.org.

MWL extends a special thanks to our seminar host:



An Opportunity for MWL Members: The MWL Media Initiative

Although the seminar above is open to all who are interested, it is particularly geared towards MWL members who plan to participate in MWL's Media Initiative. MWL created the Media Initiative in an effort to promote a more diverse and inclusive image of attorneys in the news media and across the general community. To that end, the MWL Equity Committee is continuing to build a resource list of MWL members who are willing to be contacted by local and/or national media sources for information or comment on stories related to their area of practice or knowledge (both on the record and off the record.)

MWL will also continue to build relationships with local and national media sources, in an effort to further promote the MWL members on the Media Initiative resource list.

In order to be included on the MWL Media Initiative resource list, MWL members must attend the September 12th seminar, or have attended one of its previous media-related seminars. (Contact MWL Executive Director Debra Pexa for more information: dpexa@mwlawyers.org).

MWL Premier Members 2015-2016

Minnesota Women Lawyers extends sincere thanks to its 2015-2016 Premier Members. A strong Premier Member commitment has been vital to MWL's success over this past year.

Diamond

Stacy Bettison
Felicia Boyd
Sam Hanson
Arleen Nand
Bridget Nason
Susan C. Rhode
Hon. Mary Vasaly

Sapphire

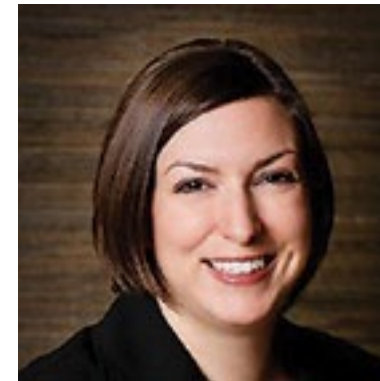
Dana Bartocci
Patricia Beithon
Suzanne Born
Susan Gallagher
Kathleen Lamb
Judith Langevin
Katie Lichty
Teresa Fariss McClain
Lynn Meyer
Pamela Rochlin
Sandra Smalley-Fleming
Lindsay Sokolowski

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

Please consider joining as a 2016-2017 Premier Member. Premier Membership allows you to streamline your annual support and enjoy the benefits all year long! Our Premier Members also help make MWL more accessible to all members through their increased support.

Complete details are available at www.mwlawyers.org.

MWL Member Spotlight: Ellen Ahrens



Ellen Ahrens is a career law clerk for Magistrate Judge Steven E. Rau. During this past year Ellen has taught legal writing in Mitchell Hamline's hybrid program. Prior to her position as a law clerk Ellen worked at Gustafson Gluek representing plaintiffs in class action cases. She is a graduate from William Mitchell College of Law.

1. When and why did you join MWL?

I joined MWL in law school because I wanted to meet women attorneys who had already survived law school and were practicing.

2. Could you describe your background, career path, and current job?

Before law school, I worked overseas for the government. Although I loved the travel, I was looking for a bigger intellectual challenge. I had always considered law school an option, and after four years overseas, I decided it was time to move back to the U.S. I went to law school at William Mitchell (now Mitchell Hamline). During law school, I sought internships and part-time jobs that were very different from each other so that I could learn as much about different legal careers as possible. After law school, I worked at Gustafson Gluek, where I represented plaintiffs in class action cases. I also joined the Board of Directors for the Innocence Project of Minnesota as the Secretary.

I decided that researching and writing were what I liked best about my job and that the pace of the firm's practice area was not the right fit for me. I had applied for judicial clerkships during law school, and decided to try again. Magistrate Judge Rau hired me, and I became

his career law clerk last summer. During this past school year, I taught legal writing in Mitchell Hamline's hybrid program.

3. What does a typical day look like in your current position?

The best part about my job is there is no typical day. The beginning is always the same, though: I read a report of all the documents filed in cases assigned to my judge. Sometimes, some of those filings require me to discuss what to do with my colleagues and the judge so I'll spend some time on that. If the judge has a hearing that day that I am attending with him, I open the courtroom for the parties and talk to the judge about the case. (Typically, we have also discussed it the day before the hearing.) If I am not involved in a hearing, then I will do research or draft something that Judge Rau has under advisement, or prepare for an upcoming motion hearing. Throughout the day, I spend time discussing cases assigned to Judge Rau with my co-clerk, Judge Rau, and our judicial assistant. These discussions range from substantive issues to case management issues.

4. What do you most enjoy about your job and what do you find most challenging?

I really enjoy the wide variety of cases that we see and learning about new areas of the law. Pro se plaintiffs can be especially challenging litigants for us to work with because they are struggling to understand the system but we, as court employees, cannot give legal advice. We are all very grateful for the Federal Bar Association's Pro Se Project, which works to match pro se litigants with volunteer attorneys.

5. What advice do you have for women law students entering the legal profession? (i.e. lessons learned in your first couple of years of practice)

(1) Say yes to opportunities, even the scary ones. Especially the scary ones! If you are scared, you are stretching and growing and learning about yourself. You will literally survive even the most uncomfortable, awkward experiences and you will be better for it.

(2) Actively look for opportunities as well. The only person who is keeping a close eye on your professional development is you.

(3) Don't be afraid of networking. It's just talking to people. The word networking fills people with dread, but if you reframe it as going to an event where you might meet one new person, it's not so bad. You never know who will be able

to put you in touch with the right person or pass along a great opportunity.

6. What have been some of the most valuable things you've learned as a law clerk?

(1) Every case is a big case to someone.

(2) Not every issue gets clearer the more time you spend on it.

(3) Candor to the court is always appreciated and increases a lawyer's credibility.

7. In observing judges in action, is there anything that has been surprising to you about their day-to-day job?

I never realized how much time magistrate judges in our district spend in settlement conferences. As a law clerk, I do not participate in these, but we often discuss when the right time is to have one and whether it would be helpful or productive. This is a great resource that the district provides to the legal community.

8. What are your plans post-clerkship or is there an area are you hoping to practice in after you've completed your clerkship?

Because I'm a career law clerk, I am not making any plans right now. I enjoyed my teaching experience, however, and may look into doing more of that at some point.

9. What recent successes can you share with us?

I can't comment on anything specific at the court, but I have really enjoyed helping my students improve their writing skills. One of my students worked really hard to improve and made great strides during her first semester.

10. How do you like to spend your free time?

I love to go for walks in my neighborhood and hikes in parks. I also like to read (fiction), travel, explore new restaurants, and spend time with my friends and family. ■

Save the Date:



2017 MWL Conference
for Women in the Law

LEAD • LEARN • CONNECT April 21, 2017

MWL is pleased to announce The 2017 MWL Conference for Women in the Law, to be held on Friday, April 21, 2017 at the Radisson Blu in downtown Minneapolis.

Once again, the goal of the MWL Conference will be to collaborate across MWL's state-wide community, to provide programming of particular interest and relevance to our membership, and to foster high-quality networking opportunities, all in the effort to advance MWL's mission.

The Conference will also incorporate MWL's 45th Annual Meeting as a luncheon program, at which time MWL will present its 2017 Annual Awards.

Complete details and registration will be available in Fall 2016.

2016 MWL Conference Highlights:



2016 MWL Conference Keynote Speaker Linda Hirshman.



MWL members Amy Schwarz, Veena Iyer, Karen Opp and Timia Flanagan enjoy the closing reception.



MWL Member Priyanka Premo gets her copy of 'Sisters in Law' signed by Author Linda Hirshman.



2016 MWL Conference Keynote Panel: MN Supreme Court Justice Margaret Chutich, Justice Natalie Hudson, Chief Justice Lorie Gildea and moderator Trisha Volpe, with 15-16 MWL President Bridget Nason.

MWL 100% Club Members - 2015-2016

Barna, Guzy & Steffen, Ltd.
Barnes & Thornburg LLP
Beacon Hill Legal
Blethen Gage & Krause PLLP
Bloch & Whitehouse, P.A.
Brekke, Clyborne & Ribich, L.L.C.
Brown and Carlson, PA
Ciresi Conlin LLP
Gaskins Bennett Birrell Schupp LLP
Gerlach, Beaumier & Trogdon
Greene Espel PLLP
Gustafson Gluek PLLC
Hammargren & Meyer, P.A.
Jackson Lewis P.C.
Johnson & Turner Attorneys at Law, P.A.
Larkin Hoffman
Larson • King, LLP
LeVander, Gillen & Miller, P.A.
Lind, Jensen, Sullivan & Peterson P.A.
Meagher & Geer, P.L.L.P.
Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak & Stewart, P.C.
Patterson Thuente Pedersen, P.A.
Reichert Wenner, P.A.
Quinlivan & Hughes, P.A.
Special Counsel
Sykora & Santini PLLP
Tuft, Lach, Jerabek & O'Connell, PLLC
Walling, Berg & Debele, P.A.
Winthrop & Weinstine, P.A.

MWL's 100% Club Members are legal employers where all female attorneys are current MWL Members. Employers must have at least two female attorneys to be eligible.

Those who are interested in being recognized as a 100% Club member must report their eligibility to MWL. If you would like a list of the MWL members at your place of employment to compare to your records, please contact MWL Membership Coordinator Hannah Zuercher.

100% Club Spotlight: Larkin Hoffman

By Tamara O'Neil Moreland.

Tamara O'Neil Moreland is a Shareholder at Larkin Hoffman concentrating her practice on litigation involving real estate, land use and construction. She serves on Larkin Hoffman's Board and as the firm's Ethics Counsel.

Larkin Hoffman is a proud member of the 100% Club and a Silver Sponsor of Minnesota Women Lawyers. Larkin Hoffman is one of the largest full-service law firms in Minnesota with more than 20 practice areas. We provide counsel to a wide variety of organizations, from small businesses and nonprofits to Fortune 500 companies, in practice areas including corporate and governance matters, litigation, real estate, government relations, labor and employment, intellectual property, information technology, franchising, and taxation. The firm also serves the needs of individuals in many areas including trusts and estates and family law.

Embedded in Larkin Hoffman's values is a strong commitment to diversity and promoting women in the legal profession. It is critical to our firm that we create an environment which attracts and embraces professionals as diverse as the world in which we live and the clients we serve. A diverse workforce provides insight and understanding of our clients' needs, allowing us to serve them better. It also generates creativity and infuses us with new ideas and approaches. Differences in opinions, backgrounds, and beliefs make us more dynamic and better equipped to work with all types of clients and all types of businesses.

The firm's commitment to diversity runs deep. We put our vision into action at the highest level, with women representing the firm on the Board of Directors and as the Chairs of the firm's two most prominent committees, the Professional Development Committee and the Diversity Committee. The women attorneys at Larkin Hoffman also serve as practice group leaders and firm committee members. In addition, the firm recently restructured its management and created an Operations Team led by four directors, with two senior women serving as the Director of Administration and the Director of Finance.

Women attorneys at Larkin Hoffman have been named to the Top 50 Women Lawyers, the Super Lawyer® and Rising Star® lists by Super Lawyer magazine, recognized as "North Star Lawyers" by the Minnesota State Bar Association, earned the designations of Minnesota State Bar Association Board Certified Labor



The women attorneys at Larkin Hoffman, an MWL 100% Club Member.

and Employment Law Specialists and Minnesota State Bar Association Board Certified Real Property Specialists, and Shareholder Phyllis Karasov received the distinguished Twin Cities Cardozo Society, Sidney Barrows Lifetime Commitment Award.

Larkin Hoffman also puts its commitment to diversity to work through its internal policies. We provide diversity training for our attorneys to learn more about themselves, their colleagues, and the clients we serve. We have a generous paid parental leave policy, a flex-time policy, a progressive part-time policy, and offer domestic partner benefits. We ensure we are making progress toward our long-term objectives by continually assessing the organization's efforts and progress toward reaching and maintaining our standards. Meeting this challenge is a top priority for the firm.

Larkin Hoffman's commitment to the advancement of women is further reflected by the fact that our firm was the first law firm in our market to launch a professional women's networking event hosted by our women attorneys. Almost two decades ago, the women attorneys at Larkin Hoffman initiated a new event to create an opportunity for professional women in business and law to meet, establish new connections and deepen existing relationships in a fun and enthusiastic environment. The event has been so successful that it has become the model for many firms in our market. Creating a standard which promotes the success of women

in business and law throughout our community is an enormously humbling achievement for our firm.

Larkin Hoffman's founding principles, dating back to 1958, include a strong commitment to giving back to the community. We have used every professional woman's networking event to bring attention to a worthy cause by partnering with a local charitable organization. We have also united our commitment to the community with our commitment to a collaborative work environment, annually participating as a team in the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life, the Salvation Army's Rock the Red Kettle, Bedrace or Bridging, and in the firm's Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service. In addition, we encourage all legal personnel to provide pro bono services and consider these services to be part of our practice. In fact, Larkin Hoffman was one of the first 14 firms to sign on to the voluntary Minnesota State Bar Association Pro Bono Standard. As a leader in our profession, we commit to spend 2% of the firm's billable hours providing legal services to individuals and organizations whose work is dedicated to addressing the needs of persons with limited means.

Larkin Hoffman is dedicated to a long-term vision of providing the best environment and opportunities for all professionals in a modern, efficient, diverse, and inclusive firm. For more information about Larkin Hoffman, please visit our website at www.larkinhoffman.com. ■

Members on the Move



Rachel T. Schromen is pleased to announce the recent opening of her law firm, Schromen Law, LLC. Rachel practices in the areas of estate planning, probate, and elder law. Rachel is a 2013 graduate of William Mitchell, where she was an Elder Justice Scholar. Rachel opened her practice in February of 2016.



Margaux Soeffker was named a 2016 Rising Star by Minnesota Super Lawyers for the fifth year in a row. Margaux Soeffker is a family law attorney with over eight years of experience in family law practice including divorce, custody, child support, post-decree actions, adoption and child protection matters. In addition to her experience as a practicing attorney, Margaux previously worked as a law clerk for Judges Susan Burke, Toddrick Barnette, and Joseph Klein in Hennepin County District Court while they were on criminal rotations.



Evon M. Spangler, of Spangler & de Stefano, PLLP, and Rachel T. Schromen, of Schromen Law, LLC, have recently co-founded the Domestic Abuse Legal Advocacy Center, PSC - a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides

pro bono legal advocacy to victims and survivors of domestic violence. The organization collaborates with local shelters to hold monthly legal clinics that are open to clients of the shelter in which the clinic is held. Legal clinics are staffed by volunteer attorneys. For more information regarding the organization or volunteer opportunities, please contact Rachel at Rachel@SchromenLaw.com or 651-571-2515.



Attorney **Sally Silk** has joined JUX Law Firm. Sally was formerly Counsel in the Business Litigation Department of Robins Kaplan LLP where she focused her practice on complex commercial disputes, trusts and estates litigation, and products liability. She has received various awards over her career including the "Outstanding Service Award in Private Practice" from the Minnesota Justice Foundation in November 2014 and the Cancer Legal Line's Volunteer Attorney of the Year Award in 2013. She currently serves as co-chair of the MSBA's Legal Assistance to the Disadvantaged Committee. Prior to practicing law, Sally was a professor of French literature.



Kendra D. Brodin has joined the Minneapolis-based intellectual property law firm of Merchant & Gould, P.C. as Manager of Business Development. In her role, Kendra will support the creation and implementation of business development strategies at all levels of the firm. Kendra currently serves as President-Elect of Minnesota Women Lawyers. Kendra earned her master's degree in social work from the University of Pennsylvania and her law degree with honors from the University of Minnesota.



Holly Miller will be joining Thomson Reuters as a Sales & Client Management Trainer. In this role Holly will be responsible for leading training efforts for Practical Law and Practice Point in addition to supporting other sales and client management onboarding programs.



Jones Day recently announced that **Annamarie Daley** will be joining its newly established Minneapolis office as a partner. Annamarie is a member of the MWL Advisory Board and a complex commercial and intellectual property trial attorney.



Attorney **Kim Lowe** has joined Minneapolis-based JUX Law Firm. Kim partners with entrepreneurs, executive management, boards of directors, multi-generational families, shareholders and investors on all aspects of the business life cycle. The transactional lawyer was a shareholder at Fredrikson & Byron, where she spent the past 13 years, and previously lawyered at Oppenheimer Wolff and Donnelly (before the firm's merger with Fox Rothchild). Kim also served as President of the Hennepin County Bar Association for the 2015-2016 term.



Katherine D. Pasker has joined the real estate team at Moss & Barnett. Pasker focuses her practice on zoning and related regulatory approvals, as well as due diligence analysis, for one of the nation's largest wireless communications companies. She is responsible for drafting agreements with federal, state, local, and tribal government entities, as well as counseling clients as to the attendant business and legal risks associated with those agreements. Pasker received her J.D., cum laude, from the University of Minnesota Law School and her B.A., cum laude, from the University of Utah.



Lenor Scheffler Blaeser on February 1, 2016 became in-house General Counsel for the Lower Sioux Indian Community in southwest Minnesota near Morton and Redwood Falls. As General Counsel, she provides legal services to the Community's Tribal Council, Tribal Government Administration, and Tribal Enterprises. Lenor grew up in the Community and is an enrolled member of the Community.



Governor Mark Dayton announced the appointment of MWL Member **Sharon G. Benson** as District Court Judge in Minnesota's Seventh Judicial District. Ms. Benson is a sole practitioner with Benson Law Office, LLC. She is an MSBA Certified Criminal Law Specialist and a part-time Seventh Judicial District public defender. Previously, she worked as a legal services attorney and as the managing attorney at Central Minnesota Legal Services. Ms. Benson earned her B.A. and her J.D. from the University of Minnesota.



Congratulations to MWL members who were recognized as 2016 Up & Coming Attorneys by Minnesota Lawyer:

Kate Baxter-Kauf
Lockridge Grindal Nauen P.L.L.P.

Meghan DesLauriers
Dorsey & Whitney LLP

Christina Rieck Loukas
Winthrop & Weinstine P.A.

Diana Marianetti Ringuette
Maslon LLP

MWL's 2015-2018 Strategic Plan

Approved by the MWL Board of Directors 4-23-15

As Minnesota Women Lawyers embarks on the second year of its 2015-2018 Strategic Plan, the organization will continue to focus its efforts on its stated goals, using MWL's mission and values as a directional guidepost. Through its efforts, MWL will work to be strategic in leveraging its resources and to further enhance its role as a legal community leader. Furthermore, MWL will actively incorporate diversity, in all its facets and at all leadership levels, as it makes decisions and coordinates activities. This effort is represented in MWL's recently adopted Diversity and Inclusion Statement. (Refer to page 17.) All MWL members are invited to get involved and assist MWL in moving its strategic goals forward.

Mission

To advance the success of women lawyers and strive for a just society.

Values

Equality: Promoting equality and diversity within the legal profession and the community.

Leadership: Developing women lawyers into leaders.

Community: Engaging and celebrating a diverse community of women lawyers.

A. EQUITY. Elevate the status and position of women attorneys.

Strategies:

1. Capitalize on MWL's unique position in the legal community to increase equity in the profession.
2. Advance MWL's mission by leveraging the MWL Parity Project.
3. Work with legal employers to effect positive change in the profession.

B. DIVERSITY. Commit to diversity and inclusion in all facets of MWL.

Strategies:

1. Create a Diversity and Inclusion Statement.
2. Develop specific, tangible goals and action steps for diversity and inclusion.
3. Strengthen partnerships with affinity bar associations.
4. Grow MWL's membership to better reflect the diversity of women attorneys in Minnesota.

C. COMMUNITY. Facilitate the engagement of women attorneys in striving for a just society.

Strategies:

1. Evaluate and affirm MWL's public policy/community action focus areas.
2. Provide meaningful opportunities for MWL members to engage with the broader community in striving for a just society.

D. FOCUS. Maximize MWL's mission impact by focusing our resources.

Strategies:

1. Streamline and focus MWL's organizational structure and processes.
2. Strengthen the Board of Directors' ongoing role in setting and guiding MWL's strategic direction.
3. Set measurable goals and outcomes to guide MWL's work.
4. Strategically provide member services that support the success of women attorneys (e.g. leadership development, professional development, mentoring and networking).
5. Develop a cohesive, recognized brand that effectively communicates MWL's mission and values.
6. Evaluate and implement opportunities to leverage technology.
7. Develop effective ways to grow and serve members in our Greater Minnesota Chapters.

E. FUNDING. Secure MWL's short and long-term financial stability.

Strategies:

1. Create a comprehensive development plan.
2. Leverage opportunities available through the new MWL Foundation, coordinating efforts as appropriate.

Minnesota Women Lawyers Adopts Diversity and Inclusion Statement

At its regular meeting on April 28th, 2016, the MWL Board of Directors adopted a Diversity and Inclusion Statement, as drafted and recommended by the MWL Governance Committee. This statement was developed in response to MWL's 2015-2018 Strategic Plan and its goal of having MWL better reflect the diversity of women attorneys in the profession. Looking ahead, MWL will continue to explore and implement specific actions towards its diversity and inclusion goals.

MWL's Diversity & Inclusion Statement April 28, 2016

Minnesota Women Lawyers (MWL) respects, values and celebrates the unique attributes, characteristics and perspectives of every person. MWL believes that bringing diverse individuals together allows us to collectively and more effectively develop ideas, respond to the needs of our membership, and address issues within our legal community. Accordingly, MWL aims to attract, retain, develop and support a membership and leadership that is diverse. MWL also seeks to leverage the proven benefits of a diverse and inclusive organization: strong leadership, equality, creativity, innovation, and community.

In addition, MWL seeks to foster and build a community of inclusion that values, cares and respects every individual. MWL welcomes the wide range of experiences and viewpoints that diverse members bring to MWL, including, but not limited to, those based on nationality, gender, culture, educational and professional backgrounds, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, age and generational differences, religion, area of practice and geography. MWL is committed to individual and organizational efforts to build respect, dignity, fairness, caring, equality and self-esteem.

Action Items:

As part of MWL's commitment to diversity and inclusion, we seek to:

- Incorporate diversity and inclusion into all aspects of our organization, including, but not limited to, membership, leadership, programming, initiatives and award criteria.
- Communicate our commitment to diversity and inclusion, including but not limited to, highlighting success stories that demonstrate our commitment, providing programming that addresses diversity and inclusion, and coordinating efforts with other organizations on issues pertaining to diversity and inclusion.
- Partner with and maintain a dialogue with other organizations – including affinity bar groups and legal employers– on diversity and inclusion issues, programming, and goals.
- Develop and deliver diversity training focused on awareness and sensitivity, improving cultural competencies, and fostering a welcoming, respectful and inclusive environment.
- Create measurable diversity goals and objectives.

Thank You to MWL's 2016 Partners

Platinum

Briggs and Morgan, P.A.
DLA Piper LLP
Dorsey & Whitney LLP
Faegre Baker Daniels LLP
Gustafson Gluek PLLC
Robins Kaplan LLP

Gold

Barnes & Thornburg LLP
Fredrikson & Byron, P.A.
Lindquist & Vennum
Stinson Leonard Street LLP
Zelle LLP

Silver

Fox Rothschild LLP
Gray Plant Mooty
Larkin Hoffman
Maslon LLP
Moss & Barnett
Nilan Johnson Lewis PA
Stoel Rives LLP
UnitedHealth Group

Bronze

3M Companies
Arthur Chapman Kettering Smetak & Pikala, P.A.
Bassford Remele
Bowman and Brooke LLP
Benchmark Reporting Agency
Carlson Caspers
Depo International
Felhaber Larson
Foster Klima Inc./The Guardian Life Insurance Company
Gaskins Bennett Birrell Schupp LLP
Greene Espel PLLP
LeVander, Gillen & Miller, P.A.
Lind, Jensen, Sullivan & Peterson, P.A.
Meagher & Geer PLLP
Mueting, Raasch & Gebhardt
Norton Rose Fulbright
Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak & Stewart, P.C.
Paradigm Reporting & Captioning
Patterson Thuente IP
Robert Half Legal
Schwebel Goetz & Sieben PA
Special Counsel, Inc.
Tower Legal Solutions
U.S. Bank
Walling, Berg & Debele, P.A.
Winthrop & Weinstine, P.A.
Xcel Energy

Make the Most of Your MWL Membership: Get Involved!

2016 MWL Committee Fair and Summer Social

Without question, MWL owes its successes over the past 44 years to its dedicated and active members. Each year, MWL Committee and Affinity Group leaders and volunteers coordinate countless events, projects and initiatives, all focused around MWL's values of equality, leadership and community. Through the tireless dedication and expertise of our members, MWL has grown to one of the largest and most vibrant women's bar associations in the country.

Find out how you can make the most of your membership and help advance MWL's mission by becoming actively involved. Please join us at MWL's 2016 Committee Fair & Summer Social on Tuesday August 23rd, from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. at Briggs and Morgan, P.A. (80 South 8th Street, IDS Tower, Suite 2200 in Minneapolis). All members and prospective members are invited to attend. Light appetizers and refreshments will be available. Guests will mix and mingle with MWL Leadership and learn more about specific volunteer opportunities.

Please register by Friday, August 19th, 2016. (www.mwlawyers.org)

Special thanks to Committee Fair Host:



Can't Attend the Committee Fair? Your Involvement is Welcome at Anytime!!

If you are not able to attend the MWL Committee Fair, but are interested in getting involved, please fill out our Committee and Affinity Group Interest Form available online. Alternatively, contact MWL Membership and Communications Coordinator Hannah Zuercher (612-338-3205; hzuercher@mwlawyers.org). We are happy to add you to a Committee or Affinity Group contact list, connect you with group leadership, and/or provide details about upcoming meetings or gatherings.

2016-2017 MWL Affinity Groups

Book Club

The MWL Book Club offers a casual and fun opportunity to meet other MWL members and discuss a book of common interest. Gatherings are held on the second Thursday every other month from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Muffuletta in St. Paul. The group enjoys dinner together (pay on your own) and then spends an hour discussing the book selection for the month.

Chair:
Karen Bohaty, Attorney at Law

Knitting Affinity Group

The MWL Knitting Affinity Group seeks to foster the creative talents of MWL members by providing a venue for members to gather and engage in knitting or other creative endeavors. The group meets on the first Wednesday of every month at 7 p.m. at rotating locations throughout the Twin Cities and metro. All creative interests are welcome.

Chair:
Shannon Harmon, Internal Revenue Service

Legal Wine Lovers

The MWL Legal Wine Lovers consists of members who enjoy tasting and learning more about wine and wine-related topics. Our goals are to increase our wine knowledge, provide educational opportunities by inviting guest speakers who are industry experts or leaders, meeting new members using a common interest as the draw, networking, and FUN!

Co-Chairs:
Jan Ballman, Paradigm Reporting & Captioning
Nikki Keirnes, Keirnes Law Firm, PLLC

Master Attorneys

Geared towards MWL's more experienced members (Admitted to the bar at least 10+ years or 35+ years old), the goal of the MWL Master Lawyers Affinity Group is to provide an opportunity for more senior members to meet, support and network with one another, and discuss experiences shared by women who have attained leadership positions within the legal profession. Meetings are held quarterly.

Co-Chairs:
Rebecca Chaffee, Best & Flanagan
Heidi Fessler, Briggs and Morgan, P.A.
Barbara Klas, @Legal Discovery

Professional Parents

The MWL Professional Parents Affinity Group hosts monthly luncheons and events, which provide a relaxed environment for MWL's working parents to meet with one another, network, and share their experiences, challenges and successes, as it relates to their families and their professional careers. The group meets on the 3rd Wednesday of every month at noon in Minneapolis.

Co-Chairs:
Kathleen Harrell-Latham, Loop Legal, PLLC
Alona Rindal, US Bank

Solo & Small Firm

Join other MWL members who are solo and small firm practitioners to discuss issues of common interest. Meetings are held on the first Friday of each month (second Friday on holiday weekends) from 9:45 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. at 8120 Penn Avenue South, 1st floor conference room in Bloomington.

Co-Chairs:
Mary Szondy, Attorney at Law
Cortney Whitehouse, Bloch & Whitehouse

2016-2017 MWL Committees

Chapter Coordination

The Chapter Coordination Committee provides direct support to current MWL Chapters, as well as supports the development of new chapters throughout Minnesota. The Chapter Coordination Committee also identifies how MWL can best support women attorneys outside of the metro-area, regardless of proximity to a current MWL Chapter. Recommendations are made to the MWL Board for subsequent implementation. Meetings: TBA

Co-Chairs:
Meghan Maes, SMRLS
Breia Schleuss, Faegre Baker Daniels LLP

Community Action & Advocacy

The Community Action & Advocacy Committee facilitates greater community service and public policy programming and activities as defined by MWL's mission and values, and approved by the Board. Current focus areas include: 1) violence against women; 2) pay equity; 3) access to justice; and 4) girl empowerment. The Committee typically meets on the first Thursday of every month from 8 am to 9 am at Peace Coffee in South Minneapolis.

Co-Chairs:
Kelsey Kelley, Anoka County Attorney's Office
Nicolet Lyon, Lyon Law Office
Michelle Looby, Gustafson Gluek PLLC
Angie Streit, Thomson Reuters

Development

The Development Committee assumes primary responsibility for establishing key stakeholder relationships and subsequently raising the funds to meet established revenue goals. This effort will be driven by the development and implementation of MWL's annual fundraising plan. The Development Committee meets on the second Tuesday of the month from 8 am to 9 am at the MWL office or via teleconference.

Co-Chairs:
Shannon Harmon, Internal Revenue Service
Susan Gallagher, Gallagher Law Office, L.L.C.
Veena Iyer, Nilan Johnson Lewis
Brooke Nelson, Bernick Lifson, P.A.

Equity

The MWL Equity Committee is tasked with general oversight for MWL's projects and initiatives related to the systemic advancement and success of women attorneys. Current Equity Committee activities include: coordination and oversight of the MWL Media Project, activities related to attaining non-profit and corporate board positions, specific practice area pipeline projects (judicial, firm, corporate, etc.), further development of MWL's Data Research Project, general oversight for and promotion of The MWL Compendium, and other related initiatives in support of MWL's Strategic Plan. The Equity Committee meets on the 4th Thursday of the month at 8:30 am at the MWL office or via teleconference.

Co-Chairs:
Maureen Carlson, Jux Law Firm
Christina Herriges, Fourth Judicial District
Adine Momoh, Stinson Leonard Street LLP
Elizabeth Patton, Fox Rothschild LLP
Sarah Rohne, University of MN Law School
Stacey Slaughter, Robins Kaplan LLP

Programming

The Programming Committee is charged with general oversight for all of MWL's programs and CLE's, ensuring MWL's work is coordinated and meeting established annual strategic goals. To that end, the Committee will also assist Staff and the Board in the development and maintenance of MWL's master calendar of events. The Committee typically meets the 1st Monday of the month at 12 pm via teleconference.

Co-Chairs:
Emerald Gratz, MN Office of Admin. Hearings
Kelly Lelo, Larson King, L.L.P.
Karen Opp, Korn Ferry
Jenny Robbins, Robins Kaplan LLP

Programming: Annual Conference

The Annual Conference Subcommittee provides general oversight and coordination for the annual MWL Conference, to be held in the spring of each year. The Committee typically meets the 1st Wednesday of the month from 12 pm to 1 pm via teleconference or at the MWL office.

Co-Chairs:
Susan Aase, Thomson Reuters
Amie Penny Sayler, Bassford Remele
Amy Schmidt, City of Bloomington
Tina Syring-Petrocchi, Barnes & Thornburg
Lynn Walters, Walters Legal Services

Programming: CLE

The CLE Subcommittee coordinates specific professional development and leadership events that support women attorneys in: 1) addressing issues of bias and inequity within the profession; 2) developing core competencies; 3) building skill and expertise within specific legal/practice areas; 4) developing leadership skills; 5) attaining leadership positions outside of the legal community; 6) developing and supporting mentoring relationships. The Committee meets on the 2nd Friday of each month at noon in the MWL offices or via teleconference.

Co-Chairs:
Cindy Eidnes, Beacon Hill Legal
Andrea Hoversten, Geraghty O'Loughlin & Kenney
Rebecca Weisenberger, UnitedHealthcare

Programming: Networking

The Networking Subcommittee coordinates MWL's stand-alone networking events. Additionally, the Committee provides support and oversight for networking events held in conjunction with other MWL events. The Committee also works to create a welcoming and accessible environment across all MWL activities, to foster opportunities for members to develop meaningful connections and relationships with one another. Meetings: TBA.

Co-Chairs:
Angela Browning, Litigation Management, Inc.
Kristen Haugen, KC Haugen Law
Nicole Truso, Faegre Baker Daniels LLP

Publications

The Publications Committee is responsible for producing MWL's quarterly publication *With Equal Right*, ensuring its content and format supports MWL's strategic objectives and goals. Meetings are held on a quarterly basis at the MWL office and via teleconference.

Co-Chairs:
Anne Greenwood Brown, Sjoberg & Tebelius
Laura Arneson, Mueting, Raasch & Gebhardt
Mary Szondy, Attorney at Law

Minnesota Women Lawyers, Inc.
600 Nicollet Mall, Suite 390B
Minneapolis, MN 55402

Renew Your Membership Today!

Current MWL members are invited to renew their Minnesota Women Lawyers membership!

All memberships expired on June 30, 2016. Together, MWL members focus on advancing the success of women lawyers and striving for a just society, and then take full advantage of membership benefits such as networking, leadership & mentoring opportunities, social events, community action initiatives and more. As MWL looks forward to the coming year and beyond, a continued commitment from individual members will be key to our ongoing success.

RENEW ONLINE at www.mwlawyers.org.

Are you a proud member of Minnesota Women Lawyers? Help MWL expand its network and invite a colleague to join us!



MWL Values:

Equality: Promoting equality and diversity within the legal profession and community.

Leadership: Developing women lawyers into leaders.