LAWYERS CLUB NEWS

INSIDE

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President's Message to Members

“If You’re Not at the Table, You’re On the Table”

By Jamie Quient

I had the great privilege of representing Lawyers Club, along with our Executive Director Elaine Lawrence, at the National Conference of Women’s Bar Associations (NCWBA) 2016 Women’s Leadership Summit in San Francisco on August 5, 2016. We were there to accept an award recognizing the work of the Lawyers Club Human Trafficking Task Force. It was an incredible honor, and more importantly, it was an opportunity to share our anti-human trafficking work with a national audience and hopefully inspire other women’s bars to take up this cause.

The NCWBA Summit was an inspiring day with so many valuable takeaways that will inform our work in the coming year. One of the highlights of the Summit was hearing Nancy O’Malley, District Attorney for Alameda County, the first woman to hold that position, speak about the importance of legislative advocacy. She explained that every day elected officials are making decisions that impact the lives of women. If we, as women lawyers and community leaders, are not serving as the voice for women, these elected representatives will make their decisions without us. To emphasize this point, O’Malley shared one of her favorite quotes “If you’re not at the table, you’re on the table.” She also emphasized that while women in elected office have played a vital role championing women’s issues, they need our help informing policy and advocating for change.

The timing of this session on advocacy was fortuitous as Lawyers Club recently revived its Legislative Committee (created at our founding and later folded into the Reproductive Rights and Women’s Advocacy Committee), rebranded as the Women’s Advocacy Committee. This Committee is tasked with vetting legislation related to the advancement of women and carrying out our advocacy efforts on priority issues – turning our ideas into laws. We will also join with other women’s organizations engaged in advocacy to identify opportunities for collaboration. To that end, Lawyers Club is co-sponsoring an event on legislative advocacy on September 19 with Women Give San Diego. Check the Lawyers Club website and weekly e-blasts for full details.

Our advocacy efforts will not be limited to legislative advocacy – we will also work outside of the legislative process to raise awareness about issues of gender inequality and discrimination. For example, next April we will take our Equal Pay Day Luncheon to the streets and hold our first ever Equal Pay Day March and Rally. We will use this public platform to demand equal pay for equal work. We will also work throughout the year to raise awareness about issues impacting women and keep these issues at the forefront of public discourse.

Another key take-away from the Summit is the need to overcome our fear of failure. As women attorneys, we are held to higher standards than our male counterparts. We are disproportionately punished for our mistakes and they are not easily forgotten. As a result, we expect perfection from ourselves and others. As the speakers at the Summit emphasized, however, we cannot let the quest for perfection impede progress. This discussion was informed by the experience of the tech/start-up industry, where they live by the motto #FailFast #FailForward. This failure-friendly culture is guided by the knowledge that we learn more from our failures than our successes. Moreover, innovation and progress require risk-taking – which carries with it the risk of failure. This discussion really resonated with me. So many of my decisions in life were informed by my own fear of failure and unwillingness to take risks. I was inspired by this discussion to get outside my own comfort zone and take risks to bring about meaningful change. As an organization we must do the same – we cannot let our fear of being too controversial or provocative hinder our fight for gender equality. This is particularly true as we engage in our advocacy efforts – legislative advocacy is certainly not for the faint of heart. We may not win on the first try and change is often incremental and painfully slow. We just have to remember that in our fight for women’s equality, even if we #FailFast, we will #FailForward.

Congratulations to Teresa Beck, who was sworn in at the Summit for another year as a Director on the NCWBA Board, and also to Renee Galente who accepted an award on behalf of California Women Lawyers, for its Elect to Run program. Lawyers Club is a proud affiliate of both NCWBA and CWL.

Jamie Quient practices insurance coverage and intellectual property litigation at Procopio, Cory, Hargreaves & Savitch LLP and is President of Lawyers Club.
Balance Symposium Luncheon: Using Mindfulness to Find Your Balance

By Amanda LoCurto and Brigid Campo

The Work-Life Balance Committee hosts the Annual Balance Symposium Luncheon and welcomes members and the legal community to learn various strategies for improving their overall well-being and the benefits of managing demanding professional and personal responsibility. The luncheon will be held on Thursday, September 16, at the Westin San Diego, generously sponsored by CBRE.

The struggle to find balance between female attorneys’ professional and personal lives is all too familiar for most. For years, we have been bombarded with images and stories of women who juggle work, marriage, kids, friends, fun, and causes with ease. By now, even the term “balance” causes some to cringe (including these authors). As a result, the vague goal of “balance” often winds up relegated to a long list of to-dos and can actually become a source of guilt when we inevitably fall short of those we perceive are achieving it. However, by practicing mindfulness, attorneys can attain tangible benefits by teaching its adherents healthy ways to manage stress and anxiety as well as improving critical thinking skills.

The Annual Balance Symposium Luncheon will feature speaker Christy Cassisa (a former lawyer cum Director of Worklife Integration Programs at the UCSD Center for Mindfulness), who will share practical strategies to use mindfulness and self-compassion to ease the impact of stress on the body, decrease anxiety and blood pressure, as well as a growing list of other physical, psychological, and professional benefits backed by sound research. Practicing mindfulness can also optimize a legal mindset by allocating time to think, recognize limitations, spot issues, and improve relationships. Certainly, everyone can find value in that.

Amanda LoCurto is an associate at Singleton Law Firm, APC, and co-chair of the Balance Committee, along with Brigid Campo, who is an associate at Klueck & Hoppes, APC.

What? When? Where?

What: Annual Balance Symposium
When: Thursday, September 15, 12:00 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.
Where: The Westin San Diego, 400 West Broadway, San Diego CA 92101
Cost: Members $30; Non-members $45; Students $20.
Register: www.lawyersclubsandiego.com
Honored
San Diego Superior Court Judge Julia Kelety will receive the Benjamin Aranda III Award at the State Bar Annual Meeting in San Diego in September. The award honors a judge who has demonstrated a long-term commitment to improving access to the courts and who has significantly improved access for low- and moderate-income Californians. The award is sponsored by the California Judicial Council, California State Bar, the California Judges Association, and the California Commission on Access.

Women Who Impact San Diego
Lawyers Club past president Vickie Turner, a partner with Wilson Turner Kosmo, was named one of the 2016 Women Who Impact San Diego by San Diego Metro magazine. Turner, who handles complex product liability matters, was one of 14 women named to the list from among 92 nominees.

SCOTUS Fellowship
Alastair Agcaoili has been selected as one of six 2016 Supreme Court Fellows with the National Association of Attorneys General in Washington, D.C. He was nominated to the fellowship by the California Attorney General’s Office where he has served as a Deputy Attorney General in the Criminal Division since 2014.

On the Move
The law firm of Kirby Noonan Lance & Hoge separated into five new firms in June. Lawyers Club Sustaining Member David Noonan was joined by partners Micaela Banach, James Lance and Ethan Boyer, and associate Genevieve Ruch at Noonan Lance Boyer & Banach LLP, which will continue to focus on complex commercial litigation, including real estate, legal malpractice defense, and employment law. That firm has moved to new office space in the East Village downtown. Associate Heather Schallhorn joined Michael Kirby and Jason Kirby at Kirby & Kirby LLP, which will continue a business litigation and trial practice downtown. Three Kirby Noonan Lance & Hoge attorneys have established solo practices, and partner Andrea Russell will continue to work as independent legal counsel to some of the newly established firms, as well as representing other clients.

Cathleen Fitch has joined the firm of Duckor Spradling Metzger & Wynne. Fitch, a Certified Legal Malpractice Law Specialist, is a former name partner of Coughlan, Semmer, Fitch & Pott, LLP, and partner at Coughlan, Semmer & Lipman, where she practiced for more than 25 years. She subsequently served as Of Counsel to the Grant Law Firm. She has extensive experience defending businesses and professionals in negligence and fraud claims, environmental claims, Americans with Disabilities Act claims, and qui tam suits.

Jodi Cleesattle is a deputy attorney general with the California Department of Justice and Lawyers Club’s Press Liaison.

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Don’t be shy about sharing your good news. Submit news of your own, or of your colleagues’ career accomplishments – awards, promotions, job changes, board appointments, published articles, presentations, etc. to Jodi Cleesattle at jcleeasatte@gmail.com. The deadline for each issue of Lawyers Club News is the first of the month prior to the month of publication.
Keynote Speaker Martha Wyrsch Shares How Elevating Women Is Better for Business

By Megan Walker

Executive Vice President and General Counsel of Sempra Energy Martha Wyrsch encouraged attendees to leverage their networks to help transform their organizations at Lawyers Club’s Fifth Annual General Counsel Roundtable Luncheon. The luncheon was presented by the Professional Advancement Committee at the US Grant on June 16.

Wyrsch drew from her breadth and depth of experience as a general counsel and business leader to discuss how diversity in organizations leads to better business decision-making and more profitable results. Wyrsch highlighted the positive impact of diversity in organizations and the two key benefits affiliated with diverse leadership: effective problem solving and greater innovation, citing research compiled by Josh Bersin in his article, “Why Diversity and Inclusion Has Become a Business Priority.”

A diverse decision-making body – inclusive of both women and men, and various races and generations – is more likely to engage in effective problem solving than homogenous groups because it is less likely to suffer from “group think” and is more likely to carefully analyze data, Wyrsch shared from Bersin’s article. Similarly, organizations with diverse leadership benefit from greater innovation. When people from a mix of different backgrounds come together, each is more likely to better prepare in anticipation of dissenting viewpoints. While consensus may be difficult to come by, this process ultimately breeds innovation.

Wyrsch elaborated on the effects of increasing the number of women in leadership roles. Specifically, companies with three or more women on the board outperform those without across several metrics. According to the 2015 Catalyst report, “The Bottom Line: Corporate Performance and Women’s Representation on Boards,” boards with high percentages of women board members outperformed those without by 53% when looking at return on equity, 42% return on sales, and 66% return on invested capital. Similarly, Sempra has experienced growth more than double that of its peers with a female CEO and 1:1 male to female ratio in its leadership team.

Following Wyrsch’s powerful presentation, she and 11 other general counsels from businesses and organizations in San Diego facilitated roundtable discussions throughout the room. Through those discussions, participants were able to brainstorm with their table leaders on how to achieve valuable diversity in their own organizations. Specifically, they discussed which practices or policies work in their own organizations and identified strategies women can employ to make their voices heard.

Danna Cotman, co-chair of the Professional Advancement Committee, and owner of ARC IP Law, PC reflected, “The conversation with in house counsel and the table members was stimulating and encouraging. Each individual offered specific action items to help increase diversity and to take a position at the table and be heard.”

The Professional Advancement Committee is sincerely grateful to the title sponsor, Gresham Savage Nolan & Tilden, PC, and for the contributions of Wyrsch and the following general counsels who generously shared their time and insight as table leaders: Rose Bowlus, Noble Americas Energy Solutions; Hannah Cole, CareFusion; Scott Denke, Seirus Innovative Accessories, Inc.; James Edwards, Cubic Corporation; Karen Landers, San Diego Metropolitan Transit System; Paul Najar, Gafcon, Inc.; Michelle Philo, Adtile Technologies; Jared Quient, BayWa USA; Bill Sailer, Qualcomm; Brittany Applestein Syz, San Diego Gas & Electric; and Eden Yaege, Square One Development.

Megan Walker is an associate at Fisher Phillips, co-chair of the Women’s Advocacy Committee, and a member of the Professional Advancement Committee.
Rachel Gelb, Amanda Singer, Stephanie Reynolds, and Rana Aryan network before the roundtable discussions begin.

Keynote speaker, Martha Wrysch, Executive Vice President and General Counsel for Sempra Energy addresses the room to discuss the power of diversity.

(R to L) Roundtable participants Eden Yaege, Brittany Applestein Syz, Bill Sailer, Megan Walker, Danna Cotman, Scott DeNile, Paul Najar, Michelle Philo, Jim Edwards, Hannah Cole, Jared Quiet, Deborah Dixon, Carla Sanderson, Martha Wrysch, Karen Landers, and Rose Bowlus gather for a photo.

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Dine Aroun ds Emphasize the Importance of Mentorship

By Shannon Finley

The Lawyers Club Networking Events Committee (NEC) presented Dine Around with Lawyers Club of San Diego, a member-only event, between May 31 and June 10. Guests attended a casual dinner with a small group of fellow members and got to know each other in an intimate setting. Participants discussed the importance of mentorship, and how mentors can help further their personal and professional development. Each dinner was hosted by a member who is a mentor in the San Diego legal community. This year’s generous hosts were: Summer Stephan, Chief Deputy District Attorney; Claudette Wilson, Partner at Wilson Turner Kosmo LLP; Janice Mulligan, Founder of Mulligan, Banham & Findley Law Firm; Karen Hewitt, Partner at Jones Day; India Jewell, General Counsel for Sony Electronics, Inc.; Patricia Hollenbeck, Partner at Duane Morris, LLP; and the Honorable Cindy Davis, Judge at the Superior Court of San Diego County. The events were held in the office or home of each host, and facilitated by an NEC member.

The Dine Around series was a success, enjoyed by new and long-time members alike. Lynn Marie Morski praised, “It was easily the most I had ever gotten to know a group of women in a networking setting.” Christine Wu, a NEC member who facilitated the dinner with Claudette Wilson, reflected, “I think all the members had a great time… I certainly did.” New member Molly Tami commented, “It was a great evening. I continue to be very impressed by all that Lawyers Club does and offers its members.”

NEC’s primary focus is planning networking events throughout San Diego County, with the goal of assisting members in developing meaningful connections with other professionals. The Dine Around Series is an annual event that is exclusively offered to members of Lawyers Club. These dinners are a great opportunity to meet new people to build a professional network in a casual and intimate setting.

The next NEC event will be a Thirsty Thursday Happy Hour on September 8 to kick off the 2016-2017 Lawyers Club year. To learn more about NEC or to assist in planning the next event, please contact co-chairs Amanda Singer and Stephanie Poli.

Shannon Finley is an associate at Pettit Kohn Ingrassia & Lutz, PC. She is the co-chair of the Law Student Outreach Committee, and a member of the Networking Events and Membership Development Committees.
Lawyers Club’s 24th Annual Golf Tournament was a Smashing Success!

By Patricia P. Hollenbeck

Lawyers Club is proud to directly support both the legal community and local community through the Fund for Justice (FFJ), a charitable foundation that awards grants benefitting at-risk women in San Diego. As part of its effort to support FFJ, Lawyers Club held its 24th Annual Golf Tournament on Friday, June 24 at the Country Club of Rancho Bernardo. The Champion Title Sponsor was Heisner Álvarez, APC.

The perfectly groomed course, beautiful weather, and relaxed atmosphere ensured that participants were treated to an enjoyable day—a welcome respite from hectic legal schedules. Golfers participated in the “scramble format” event while enjoying lunch on the course and participating in several contests: Hole-in-One, Putting Contest, Closest to the Pin, and Longest Drive.

Golfers were also able to purchase raffle tickets for the chance to win gift baskets, including “Shop ‘til You Drop” (including Nordstrom and Starbucks gift cards, and a one-night stay with breakfast at the U.S. Grant); “Mix Yourself a Moscow Mule”; and “San Diego Sports Lover” featuring a football signed by Chargers’ running back Melvin Gordon.

Thanks to our sponsors, tournament participants enjoyed a wide variety of tee-area cocktails, ranging from Jell-O shots to frozen margaritas. Sponsors also demonstrated their creative side by wearing “themed” apparel, arranging for a photo booth, and creating a contest that involved aiming at cut-outs of LeBron James and Steph Curry (sure to please both Warrior and Cavs basketball fans).

While the $10,000 Hole-in-One prize eluded Lawyers Club golfers, several other contests produced winners: Scott Whitley and Ashley Riggs won the Putting Contest; Rob Rodriguez and Stacey Zoiypoulos won the Closest to the Pin Contest; and Patrick Hulme and Rae Chung won the Longest Drive Contest.

Deborah Dixon, Senior Trial Attorney at Gomez Trial Attorneys and past president of Lawyers Club 2015-2016, raved, “The tournament was once again a tremendous success, thanks to the hard work of our co-chairs, Patty Hollenbeck and Shanly Hopkins, and the entire committee. We enjoyed a beautiful day at the golf course and were spoiled by our dedicated sponsors, all while raising money for our Fund for Justice!”

Additional congratulations to the first place foursome winners:
Women: Anne Rudolph, Laurie Barber, Lis Roper, and Rae Chung.
Men: Eddie Rodriguez, Fred Hernandez, Daniel Pena, and Bob Rogers.
Mixed: Scott Whitley, Debra Patterson, Ramona Whitley, and Ashley Riggs.

Immediately following the tournament, golfers and non-golfers attended a wine and cheese reception on the back patio sponsored by Duane Morris. The pre-dinner reception featured a live musical performance by Limited Jurisdiction, featuring Magistrate Judge Mitch Dembin and other talented band members.

The relaxed and congenial vibe of the golf tournament and reception continued into dinner, where Shanly Hopkins and Patty Hollenbeck, Golf Tournament co-chairs, with the help of Deborah Dixon, served as MCs to thank tournament players and guests, as well as to announce the tournament, contest and raffle winners. Memorably, Jay Jeffcoat, a partner at DLA Piper and long-time member of the FFJ committee, demonstrated an extraordinary lucky streak in the raffle. Although tickets were drawn from different baskets, his tickets were “winners” three times! Ever gracious, and perhaps overwhelmed by a desire to quickly purchase California Lottery tickets, Jeff returned one of the prizes, which was raffled off to another lucky attendee.

The number of women participating in the tournament has increased significantly over the past several years as Lawyers Club continues its efforts to arrange for pre-tournament golf lessons. This year, Roxy Carter, recently elected to the Lawyers Club Board of Directors, was instrumental in making arrangements for three tracks of lessons—two for beginners, and one for intermediate/advanced players. All three sessions, sponsored by DTI and TREW Financial, were held at Tecolote Canyon Golf Course. We encourage you to sign up next year and play in the tournament!

Patricia P. Hollenbeck is a partner at Duane Morris, LLP, and past-president of Lawyers Club.
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Patty Hollenbeck
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The Country Club of Rancho Bernardo

Players eagerly await the shotgun start.

Trevor Davis, Lisa Cox, Bibi Fell, and Deborah Dixon enjoy the sunshine.

Golf Committee co-chair Patricia Hollenbeck welcomes son, Brian Hollenbeck, friend Ryan Hoffman, and husband, Steve Hollenbeck to the tournament.
San Diego Chapter Joint Task Force on Gender Equality – From Constructive Dialogue to Tangible Ideas and Solutions

By Shalini K. Kedia

Two years ago Lawyers Club and Association of Corporate Counsel – San Diego Chapter (ACC-SD Chapter) formed an unprecedented Joint Task Force (JTF) on Gender Equality to spark a constructive dialogue within top-levels of law firms and at the C-Suite level regarding the advancement of women in the legal profession. Specifically, the goal of the JTF is to encourage business practices that promote gender equality and inclusion within our profession by cultivating high-level discussions to empower law firms with tangible ideas and solutions to address the lack of advancement and retention of women in law firms.

Last fall, the JTF held its inaugural program at Qualcomm featuring nationally recognized expert, Kimberly Papillon, Esq. Papillon discussed the science behind decision-making strategies to overcome cognitive roadblocks that may hinder inclusion, creativity and success. This program launched an unprecedented initiative that brought together over 100 general counsel and law firm leaders from throughout the San Diego community to join forces in a strategic initiative to drive long-term business practices that promote inclusion and equality within the legal profession. The program received very positive feedback from the attendees and indeed created the synergy necessary to address the issue.

This month, the JTF will hold its second program, focusing on the next step, in an effort to go beyond a discussion on implicit bias. Local in-house counsel and law firm leaders have been invited to participate in a program designed to generate tangible ideas and solutions to foster gender diversity and inclusion within the legal community, and particularly at law firms.

The September 2016 program is by invitation only. Lawyers Club and ACC-SD Chapter extended invitations to managing partners of law firms with offices located in San Diego consisting of ten or more attorneys and to local general counsel.

RSVPs from In-House Counsel from local companies in support of the event include Adtile Technologies, CareFusion, Cubic Corporation, Jack in the Box Inc., Molina Healthcare, Qualcomm, Seirus Innovation, and Sony Electronics Inc., along with among many others.

The JTF was co-founded by former Lawyers Club Board Member Shalini K. Kedia and William B. Sailer, Senior VP, Legal Counsel, Qualcomm Incorporated. Sailer is a former president of the ACC-SD Chapter.

Shalini K. Kedia Chairs the Association of Corporate Counsel-SD Chapter and Lawyers Club of San Diego Joint Task Force on Gender Equality. She is the Intellectual Property Practice Planning & Analysis Coordinator for Jones Day’s global IP Practice.
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Rachel S. Gelb
By Mehry Mohseni
Rachel S. Gelb is an associate with Kolodny & Pressman, LLP, where she specializes in commercial real estate and business transactions. What Gelb enjoys the most about her profession is the intersection between business law, strategy and negotiation throughout the process of each transaction.

After graduating from the University of California, Santa Barbara, Gelb worked as a paralegal in a large New York City large firm. Next, she attended Brooklyn Law School, where she served as the associate managing editor for the Brooklyn Journal of International Law. During law school, Gelb also interned at the New York Stock Exchange and the New York City Law Department.

Gelb joined Lawyers Club to maximize her impact in the legal community and to develop a better sense of belonging. She has experienced and witnessed gendered stereotypes in the legal profession, and feels it is important to demand change. Since joining Lawyers Club, Gelb has been impressed by the many empowering women who are members. Gelb attended a Dine Around as her first Lawyers Club event, and fondly remembers the warm welcome from the group, the meaningful conversation, and the stories shared. Gelb has since been inspired to focus not only on her own professional aspirations, but also to help others achieve theirs.

Gelb is a San Diego native (Del Mar). During her free time, she enjoys Vinyasa yoga, cooking, reading, delicious cheeses (former Cheese of the Month Club member), and the company of her black lab puppy.

Mehry Mohseni is an attorney with Cage & Miles, LLP and co-chair of the Reproductive Justice Committee.

Alara T. Chilton
By Jacqueline Kallberg
Alara T. Chilton has been a longtime member of Lawyers Club. A graduate of Northeastern University, she is currently a solo practitioner running the Law Office of Alara T. Chilton. Chilton practices primarily criminal defense and consumer rights litigation.

Chilton joined Lawyers Club because she wanted to meet others who support Lawyers Club’s mission to make the world a better place for women and many others. During her time as a Lawyers Club member, Chilton has gained so much both personally and professionally. She has gained a greater understanding of the many challenges faced by the women who founded Lawyers Club and what they had to overcome. She has also gained a great deal of support from Lawyers Club members. Many of these women have mentored and guided her and become good friends.

In her free time, Chilton likes to do Bikram yoga, run, and eat chocolate. In fact, she thinks she overuses the word “chocolate” because she eats at least three pieces a day! Chilton has a cat that she rescued as a kitten, and she has close family in San Diego.

Jacqueline Kallberg is the primary attorney at the Kallberg Law Group and is a member of the Professional Advancement and Networking Committees.

Kimberly Ahrens
By Kate Langmore
Kimberly Ahrens earned her B.A. in journalism from San Diego State University and her J.D. from California Western School of Law in 2006. After law school, Ahrens practiced at a small employment law firm for a couple of years, then founded The Ahrens Law Office, where she represents plaintiffs in employment law disputes.

When asked what she likes most about employment law, Ahrens explained: “I have always been troubled by inequality, so it is especially rewarding to represent those who have suffered injustice. Also, I like that this area of law changes so frequently—it keeps my interest!”

Ahrens first joined Lawyers Club when she was a law student after attending the Spring Wine and Cheese Reception. Ahrens was impressed that the attorneys went out of their way to mentor students, for example by offering advice about law school and job openings.

As an attorney member of Lawyers Club, Ahrens has been involved in a variety of capacities. She co-chaired the Wine and Cheese Reception Committee for several years, and served as a member of the Professional Advancement Committee and the Equal Pay Day subcommittee.

On her experience as a member of the Equal Pay Day subcommittee, Ahrens recalled, “It was great to conceptualize and execute the event, then watch it grow to be such a success!”

As in her professional life, Ahrens enjoys learning during her time away from the office. She has dabbled in photography and is currently learning oil painting. Although Ahrens insists that she’s “terrible” at painting, she enjoys tapping into a different (non-lawyer) part of her brain. Ahrens also indulges her penchant for learning by traveling with her wife, which gives her the chance to experience new cultures and food.

Kate Langmore is an associate at Bohm Law Group and Member Profile Coordinator for Lawyers Club News.
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Committed to our clients and our community
Celebrate Halloween with Lawyers Club’s 20th Annual Halloween Read-In

By Michele Macosky

Lawyers Club will celebrate its 20th annual Halloween Read-in from 11:15 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. on October 31 at Central Elementary School in City Heights. Central Elementary is a pre-kindergarten through 5th grade school where children routinely face significant economic obstacles while also overcoming cultural and linguistic challenges associated with a large immigrant population. For two decades, Lawyers Club’s Community Outreach Committee has successfully organized read-ins at Central Elementary School. At each read-in, approximately 70 volunteers go into the classrooms to read and serve as role models for the children, talking with them about a love of reading, the importance of school, going to college, or getting a professional job.

As part of this celebration, Lawyers Club will collect school supplies to present to the school at the read-in. There is a great need for adequate school supplies at Central and several ways to help: (1) school supplies may be brought to the Lawyers Club luncheons in September or October; (2) school supplies may be dropped off at various law firms around San Diego that have agreed to assist as drop-off locations (information below); (3) volunteers may bring school supplies with them to the event; and (4) school supplies may be purchased and sent directly through the Amazon.com wishlist for “Central Elementary School Students”. Come join the fun and festivities while helping to make a difference. Please mark your calendars with the earlier start time to catch the surprise guest speakers. Costumes, while not required, are encouraged.

For more information, to volunteer as a reader for the Halloween Read-in, or to obtain the school’s wish list of most needed supplies and the most current list of school supply donation drop off locations, please contact Michele Macosky at Macosky@san.rr.com.

Michele Macosky is the owner of the Law Office of Michele Macosky. Macosky is a former Lawyers Club board member, a founding member of the Community Outreach Committee (“COC”), and the current COC Central Elementary Liaison/Read-In Coordinator.

What? When? Where?

What: 20th Anniversary Halloween Read-In
When: Monday, October 31, 11:15 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.
Where: Central Elementary School in City Heights
Cost: Free!
Registration: Contact Michele Macosky at Macosky@san.rr.com to RSVP

SAVE the DATE

20th Annual Halloween Read-In with Lawyers Club

Big plans are afoot for the annual Lawyers Club Halloween Read-In at Central Elementary School in City Heights where volunteers will read to underprivileged K-5 students while encouraging literacy, education, and careers. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Halloween Read-In which will be celebrated by Lawyers Club and Central Elementary together with prominent guest speakers at the event! Michele Macosky, who has overseen every Read-In (and the expansion to include a Spring Read-In 16 years ago) announced that the featured speakers will include San Diego Mayor Kevin Faulconer and City Council President Pro Tem Marti Emerald.
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Legislative Update

By Amanda LoCurto

Federal

U.S. Supreme Court Strikes Down Two Texas Anti-Abortion Laws. On June 27, 2016, the U.S. Supreme Court handed down its much-anticipated decision in Whole Woman’s Health v. Hellerstedt. In a 5-3 decision, the Court found that HB2, a sweeping Texas measure that imposed numerous restrictions on access to abortion care, such as requiring abortion providers to obtain admitting privileges at hospitals and requiring abortion-providing facilities to meet stringent building specifications, did not actually serve the government’s stated interest of promoting women’s health. The requirements would have the effect of forcing 90% of Texas’ 40 abortion clinics to close. The Court’s opinion stated these restrictions placed an unconstitutional “undue burden” on women seeking abortion care and that the challenged provisions do not offer medical benefits sufficient to justify the substantial hurdles the law created. The Court also noted the task of determining whether a law placed an unconstitutional burden on a woman’s right to abortion lies with the courts, not the legislatures. During oral argument, the State of Texas admitted that there was no evidence that the restrictions had helped even one woman and in her concurring opinion, Justice Ginsburg wrote, “many medical procedures, including childbirth, are far more dangerous to patients, yet are not susceptible to ambulatory surgical center or hospital admitting privileges requirements...Given those realities, it is beyond rational belief that HB2 could genuinely protect the health of women, and certain that the law would simply make it more difficult for them to obtain abortions.”

Wisconsin and Mississippi Laws Restricting Access to Abortion Blocked by U.S. Supreme Court. Following its ruling in Whole Woman’s Health (see above), the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear challenges to federal appeals court decisions blocking laws in Wisconsin and Mississippi from taking effect. Those states’ restrictive laws, similar to those struck down as unconstitutional in Texas, would have required abortion-providing doctors to have admitting privileges at local hospitals and threatened to close the last abortion clinic in Mississippi.

State

Louisiana Lawsuit Challenges Abortion Restrictions. In the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in Whole Woman’s Health (see above), the Center for Reproductive Rights (“CRR”) filed a lawsuit on July 1, 2016 in federal district court challenging seven Louisiana state laws which restricted access to reproductive healthcare. The Lawsuit claims the laws are similar to the recently struck down Texas law, and work to collectively to create a “web of red tape” that unduly restrict a woman’s constitutional right to abortion. In a statement, CRR President and CEO, Nancy Northrup, said, “Louisiana politicians are trying to do what the U.S. Supreme Court just ruled decisively they cannot, burying women’s right to safe and legal abortion under an avalanche of unjustified and burdensome restrictions.”

California: 3 Crisis Pregnancy Centers Served with Notices of Violation Under FACT Act. In July, the L.A. City Attorney served notices of violation on three so-called crisis pregnancy centers (“CPC’s”) for allegedly breaking the new state law known as the Reproductive Freedom, Accountability, Comprehensive Care, and Transparency (FACT) Act. The law requires licensed pregnancy-related centers to display a statement and provide a number to call for free and low-cost birth control and abortion care. Unlicensed facilities must also disclose they are not medical facilities. The cited facilities allegedly failed to post the requisite notices. Matt Bowman is senior counsel for Alliance Defending Freedom, which represents all three facilities in question. Bowman told Rewire reporters that, forcing faith-based clinics to, “communicate messages or promote ideas they disagree with, especially on life-and-death issues like abortion,” violates their core beliefs and threatens First Amendment free speech rights.

Alaska: Alaska Supreme Court Strikes Down Parental Notice Law. On July 22, 2016, the Alaska Supreme Court overturned a law requiring abortion providers to notify the parent or guardian of a minor seeking abortion care. The Court found there was no basis on which to distinguish between minors seeking abortion and minors who choose to carry their pregnancy to term, thereby violating Alaska’s equal protection laws in its state constitution. The evidence showed that while many minors choose to involve a parent in their decision to have an abortion, many minors live in homes that are abusive or otherwise unsafe to disclose a pregnancy. The law would have required a minor seeking abortion care to initiate a complicated legal procedure to obtain judicial approval to bypass the parental notice requirement.

Texas: Felony Charges Dropped Against Planned Parenthood Video Anti-Abortion Activists. On July 25, 2016, a Texas judge dismissed the felony charge of tampering with a government record against David Daleiden and Sandra Merritt, the anti-abortion activists who produced the heavily-edited “sting” videos about Planned Parenthood, featuring actors posing as members of a fake biologics firm and purporting to show Planned Parenthood profiting from the sale of fetal tissue (there are two Planned Parenthood affiliates that donate fetal tissue for medical research, if the woman chooses to do so). Daleiden was also charged with misdemeanor attempt to purchase human organs. District Attorney Devon Anderson said that Texas law limits what can be investigated after a grand jury’s time is extended, and because of the that and “careful research and review,” the indictments were dismissed. Daleiden still faces multiple civil lawsuits and is under investigation by the office of California Attorney General Kamala Harris.

Amanda LoCurto is an associate at Singleton Law Firm, APC, and co-chair of the Balance Committee.
California Women Lawyers 42nd Annual Dinner and Silent Auction

By Michelle Ialeggio

The California Women Lawyers Annual Dinner, co-sponsored by Lawyers Club, will be held at the San Diego Marriott Marquis Marina Hotel on September 29 as the kickoff event for the California State Bar Annual Conference. This year’s theme is “Inspire, Inform, Illuminate.”

The dinner features keynote speaker University of California President Janet Napolitano. Napolitano served as governor of Arizona and the Secretary of the United States Department of Homeland Security under President Barack Obama. Napolitano has served as president of the University of California system since September 2013.

San Diego’s own Executive Director of Appellate Defenders Elaine Alexander will be presented with the Fay Stender Award in recognition of her commitment to providing rights for all. A group of local San Diego distinguished leaders, including former Lawyers Club president Wendy Behan, former board members Renee Galente and Michelle Ialeggio, and current Lawyers Club board member Tara Duester, will be sworn in to the CWL board of directors along with California Women Lawyers’ incoming president Chris Chambers Goodman.

California Women Lawyers is the only statewide bar association for women in California. Much like Lawyers Club, California Women Lawyers works to advance women in the legal profession and serves as an advocate for the concerns of women in society. Tickets start at $150 and can be purchased on cwl.org or by contacting Executive Director Kristen Calderon at 916-930-9020.

Michelle Ialeggio is a Deputy District Attorney. She is a past Lawyers Club board member, currently chairs the Judicial Endorsements Committee, and serves as District 9 Governor for California Women Lawyers.
September 2016

Thursday, 9/8/16
Guys, Gals and Lawyers Club Pals Thirsty Thursday Happy Hour
5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Bootlegger, 804 Market Street, San Diego, CA 92101

Thursday, 9/15/16
Lawyers Club Monthly Luncheon: Balance Symposium
12:00 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.
The Westin San Diego
400 West Broadway, San Diego CA 92101

October 2016

Wednesday, 10/5/16
Professional Advancement Committee Program
Location – TBD

Friday, 10/7/16
New Member Coffee
8:00 a.m.
Location – TBD

November 2016

Thursday, 10/20/16
Lawyers Club Monthly Luncheon: Diverse Women's Committee
12:00 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.
US Grant
326 Broadway, San Diego CA 92101

Thursday, 10/27/16
Fall Judicial Reception
5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Location – TBD

Monday, 10/31/16
Community Outreach Halloween Read-In
11:15 a.m. – 1:15 p.m.
Central Elementary School

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Step 4: This will direct you to the blog posts. To receive a notification email when a new blog post is available, select "subscribe" at the top.

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If you are interested in writing for the Blog, please contact Kristin Beattie at beattiebecker@yahoo.com.

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Ms. Willamarie Heiskala
Ms. Lauren Hofflin
Mr. Matthew Kaemerle
Ms. Kelli Killion
Mr. Christopher Lawson
Ms. Yijin Jennifer Lee
Ms. Diane Lopez
Ms. Elizabeth MacKinnon
Mr. Louis Masry
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Introducing the All New Mentorship Committee

By Affi Eghbaldari

Lawyers Club has relaunched its Mentorship Committee, which will take on the hot topics of peer-to-peer mentorship, and ways to find and cultivate sponsors. This year, the Mentorship Committee will focus on learning effective ways to meet and cultivate mentors and sponsors and garner skills to help guide and advance our members’ careers.

The Mentorship Committee co-chairs, Affi Eghbaldari and Maryann D’Addezio Kotler, are honored and excited to serve. Both are dedicated to the founding principles of Lawyers Club and look forward to sharing their experiences with members and encourage them to become active members of the Mentorship Committee. This year, the Mentorship Committee will meet the second Wednesday of every month at 5:30 p.m. at varying locations. The Committee will rotate the style of its monthly meetings to include mixers, traditional meetings, and Dine Arouns.

Mark your calendars for a kickoff mixer on September 14, at 5:30 p.m. at Seasons 52, 4505 La Jolla Village, San Diego, CA 92122. Lawyers Club members are encouraged to attend the Mentorship Committee kickoff event to share ideas and help plan the year’s exciting events.

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Silvina Tondini Wins Community Service Award

By Assly Sayyar

Each June, Lawyers Club presents the Community Service Award at the North County Bar Association Annual Dinner, which is co-hosted by Lawyers Club. This year, Lawyers Club was pleased to present the 2016 Community Service Award to Silvina Tondini on June 16. Lawyers Club North County Chapter outgoing President Danielle Moore and incoming Regional Director for North County, Renee Leakakos presented the award to Tondini. Both Lawyers Club then-president Deborah Dixon and president-elect Jamie Quient were also present at the dinner.

The Community Service Award bears the statement “Service Above Self,” and those words apply to this year’s recipient. Tondini lives and works in North County, and manages a full-time immigration and business law practice. Tondini is very active in the community and is generous with her time and skills. Tondini is a member in good standing of both the California and District of Columbia State Bars. She is active in multiple local lawyers groups, including the American Immigration Lawyers Association, Lawyers Club, and the North County Bar Association where she also serves as a director. Further, Tondini serves as director on the boards of the Unitarian Universalist Refugee and Immigrant Services and Education and Healthy Kids Happy Faces, Los Angeles. In the past three years she has worked as a volunteer attorney with a host of different groups, including the San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium, ABA Immigration Justice Program, Legal Aid Society of San Diego, Ready Now San Diego, Las Valientes (Vista CA), and Comerciantes Latinos Asociados.

When presenting the award to Tondini, Leakakos noted: “During the first quarter of 2016 alone, she devoted more than 30 pro-bono hours as volunteer attorney at different events.”

Tondini expressed her gratitude after receiving the award. She will be continuing her efforts in the community by volunteering and speaking at community seminars, workshops and events in North County and throughout San Diego County as a whole.

Assly Sayyar is a solo business and real estate litigator and transactional attorney practicing at Assly Sayyar, Attorney at Law, Inc. with offices in North County San Diego and Las Vegas, Nevada.

Networking Events Committee presents Thirsty Thursday Happy Hour

Join Guys, Gals and Lawyers Club Pals to kick-off the new membership year at the first Thirsty Thursday Happy Hour of the year.

Come mix and mingle with Lawyers Club members while enjoying drinks and light appetizers at Bootlegger in the East Village. Free for members and non-members. We especially want to welcome all the men who support Lawyers Club and encourage members to bring a male colleague or friend that may not be a Lawyers Club member, but is interested in learning more about Lawyers Club. Bring a friend, make a friend and expand your professional network. Register at www.lawyersclubsandiego.com by Tuesday, September 6.
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