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October 9th is WLA Day in St. Louis

By WLA President Nicole Colbert-Botchway

I am so proud of The Women Lawyers' Association for taking a stand against domestic violence and putting on a successful Red Carpet Fashion Show Fundraiser on October 9, 2009, during Domestic Violence Awareness month. Special thanks go to our Event Co-Chairs Gen Frank and Joan Swartz, who used their expertise and energy to make it worthy of five stars.

Mayor Francis Slay officially declared October 9th as WLA Day in the City of St. Louis. Additionally WLA was recognized by a St. Louis County proclamation for its yearlong effort to raise awareness of the devastation of domestic violence in our community and to raise funds to support local domestic violence-related service providers.



WLA President Nicole Colbert-Botchway and Event Co-Chair Joan Swartz with the Proclamation of WLA Day.

For this event, The Women Lawyers' Association joined with local public and private organizations providing support for victims of domestic violence to create a special evening of fun, fashion and fundraising. We could not have put on this event without our generous sponsors, led by Midwest Litigation Services, Macy's and Mosaic Modern Fusion Restaurants. Other sponsors included Pure Natur Salon & Spa, Grip Agency, O'Fallon Brewery, Law Offices of Joan M. Swartz, Thompson Coburn LLP, Rabbitt Pitzer and Snodgrass, Sandberg, Phoenix & von Gontard, ShredIt, Richard Banks & Associates and JurisTemps.

The evening included a fashion show sponsored by Macy's with both professional and local celebrity models from the legal profession, including Marjorie Carter, Bruce Hopson, Erin Weaver, Joel King, Heather Hays, Tony Soukenik, Zoe Lyle, Reuben Shelton, Mariel Taylor, Todd Gampp, Joe Frank, Mary Ann Sedey, Amy Gunn, Lisa Herder, Elizabeth Schlesinger, Gen Frank, Dee Joyce Hayes, Elizabeth Grana, and Annette Slack. Check out our website for a link more photos, which will be included in the December issue of the St. Louis Magazine.

**WLA ANNUAL
HOLIDAY PARTY AND
CHARITY
AUCTION**

*Thursday,
December 10, 2009
5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.*

**Thompson Coburn LLP
One US Bank Plaza
St. Louis, MO 63101**

**All Proceeds to Benefit
L.A.A.W.**

If you have a donation
or to RSVP, please contact Kristine
Bridges at
kbridges@thompsoncoburn.com

(Continued on Page 7)

BRAGGIN' RIGHTS

Our mothers were wrong. WLA encourages everyone to submit your own or your colleagues' accomplishments so we can recognize you here and inspire others to keep plugging away.

Way, way, way to go to **Amy Collignon Gunn** & **Anne Marie Brockland** of the Simon Law Firm for winning a **\$1.2 million dollar verdict** in a medical malpractice case in Cole County! A hearty congrats to **Nancy Vidal** who made **partner** at Lashley Baer. A nod to the impressive appointment of **Melissa Marglous Merlin** to **FOCUS St. Louis's Leadership Class**. Congrats to all the women named in the 2009 edition of **Lawyer's Weekly's Up & Coming Edition** but a special shout-out to WLA President-Elect **Jessica Liss** for her inclusion in this fine group. Super job to **Pam Wright** for being appointed by Gov. Jay Nixon to the **State Lottery Commission**. Hats off to WLA Board Member **Christallyn McCloud** for being selected as 1 of 15 lawyers chosen for the 2009-2010 **MO Bar's Leadership Academy!** Super job to **Hope Whitehead** for her appointment to the Missouri Real Estate Appraisers Commission by Gov. Nixon. Many kudos to **Professor Kimberly Norwood** of the Washington University School of Law who was the **first** recipient of the St. Louis Diversity Job Fair's **Commitment to Diversity Award**. And last, but definitely not least, a *huge* Atta' Girl! to **Mavis Thompson** for her election to President of the **National Bar Association!**

It's always great to see women lawyers (and WLA members) doing great things and it's our pleasure to show off their accomplishments. For those whose announcements we've missed, congratulations and please email us at wla@wlastl.org so we can be sure to give you your due.



Amy Collignon Gunn



Anne Marie Brockland



Nancy Vidal



Melissa Merlin



Jessica Liss



Pam Wright



Christallyn McCloud



Professor Kim Norwood



Mavis Thompson

Fall 2009's Jam-packed Calendar of WLA Events

Fall 2009 was a busy season for WLA and its members and friends. Our Installation Banquet on Sept. 2, 2009, at the Historic Mayfair Hotel was attended by 150 friends of WLA (see photos below). The new Board Members thank you for your encouragement! The new Board quickly sprang into action and hosted a networking breakfast at Midwest Litigation on Sept. 25. We fed and entertained nearly 50 attendees of the Missouri Bar Annual Meeting - a big thank you to everyone at Midwest for their generous support. Later that day, the Annual WLA Golf Tournament teed off at Probststein Golf Course in Forest Park - thank you to the golfers and all of those who made it another successful event. As our page 1 piece describes, our Red Carpet Fashion Show Fundraiser, a new event for us this year, promises to become a regular on our calendar. On Nov. 6, we partnered with the Sue Shear Institute to host "The Judicial Selection Process," a CLE for those interested in becoming judges, judicial commissioners, or simply curious about the process. We truly appreciate the impressive speakers, moderators and the large number of attendees. Don't worry if you missed any of these events - come to the Holiday Party and Auction on December 10 at Thompson Coburn! See you there. - JWK



Top Row: The Honorable Lisa Van Amburg and the Honorable Anna Forder; WLA President Nicole Colbert-Bochway and Attorney Dee Joyce Hayes; Attorney Erv Switzer and the Honorable Mary Kay Hoff.

Second Row: The 2009-2010 WLA Board is sworn in; WLA Past-President Tricia Susi and President's Award Recipient Marjorie Carter.

Third Row: Award Recipient Frankie Mae Freeman; Attorneys Joan Swartz, Cynthia Averbuch Albin and Heather Hays.

Like Mother, Like Daughter: Our Law School Friends

by Kristine Bridges



I'm going to say it. I like being a lawyer! In fact, when my daughter approached me and told me she wanted to go to law school, I could not have been more thrilled and honored that she was going to follow in my footsteps.

What I failed to realize, however, was that this meant I would get to relive the "joys" of law school through my daughter. We all remember those "joys" – the LSAT, law school itself, taking the bar. No one in her right mind wants to relive these horrors, yet here I am in the midst of it. I decided the thing to do is write about it here – sharing and comparing our law school experiences.

Of course her law school experience will differ from mine in many ways. When I started law school I had already been married, was the mother of nine-year-old twins (she is one of them) and was divorced. She is single with no children and fresh out of undergrad. I worked a full-time job and attended law school part-time in the evening. She is not working and attends law school full-time. I had an ex-husband who thought the Court's order of child support was more like a guideline and paid when he did not need the money for something "more important." She has me to buy her groceries and necessities. I am not saying her experience will be any easier – just different.

Although our law school experiences differ in many ways, in other ways they will be similar. She will endure endless hours of studying. She will take first-year exams and stress out over them. I will read to her boxes and boxes of flashcards like she did for me (she was only nine years old but she could read). But the good news is she, like I did, will make lifelong friendships that will endure the test of time. We all have them. We have the friends who told us that we did a great job answering the professor's questions even though our voices were shaking and cracking the entire time. We have the friends who told us that we did not bomb the final exam even though they have no idea what we wrote or even if we wrote anything remotely related to the subject of law. Finally, we have the friends who supported us in a time of need and took us out when we needed the downtime. These friends were our life support in law school and continue to be our friends in life.

My daughter is already very familiar with these friends. One recent incident enlightened her about them. Eight weeks into her first year we received a phone call from her. She was crying uncontrollably. What we gleaned from this "conversation" (and I use that term loosely since most of the conversation was her gasping between sobs) was that the hard drive on her laptop crashed. Did she have a backup? Of course not! All her notes from the first eight weeks were gone in the blink of an eye. (We now refer to this as The Crash of 2009.) The good news is that her newfound friends rallied around her and provided her with their own notes and outlines in an attempt to make things right. These are friends she will have forever, no matter who practices where.

I emailed one of her friends on Facebook and thanked her for stepping up to the plate and organizing the effort to provide my daughter with these materials. She replied with a very nice email about how dedicated my daughter is to law school. Of course, I was bursting with pride. It is nice to hear that from a third party. However, it was the P.S. to this email that meant more to me than words can say. It read, "You do realize how much she admires you as a lawyer, right?"

My daughter is truly my best friend and the "joy" of law school is bringing us even closer together.



MEMBERSHIP INVOICE
SEPTEMBER 2009 - 2010

Nicole Colbert-Bochway, President
PO Box 1428
St. Louis, MO 63188
E-Mail: wla@wlastl.org
www.wlastl.org

Please provide the following information for our records and return to: WLA; PO Box 1428; St. Louis, MO 63188

DATE: _____ Membership type (circle one): **Renewal** **New Membership**

Name: _____ Cell-phone # _____

Firm/Company: _____ Phone: _____

Street Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Fax: _____ Website: _____ E-mail: _____

Please check to be included in the following:

- List of professionals willing to receive requests from media for comment on an issue in my practice
- Law students and less experienced lawyers can contact me for mentorship, resume review, mock interviews and similar

Please circle the committees in which you would like to participate:

Legislative Committee Golf Tournament Committee Judicial Committee Scholarship Committee Diversity Committee
Diversity Committee Public Relations Committee Advisory/Historian Committee Holiday Party/Charity Auction Committee

Please circle your desired level of membership:

Lifetime	\$2,000
Black Robe	\$250*
Gavel	\$150*
Scales of Justice	\$100*
Private Attorneys	\$80
Public Interest/Gov't Sector Attorneys	\$65
2009 Graduates/New Admittees	\$20
Law Student	\$10
One Time fee for Online Directory	\$10 (must pay this one time fee to be included in the directory)
TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____	

**Proceeds from additional dues paid by Black robe, Gavel & Scales of Justice Members will be given to the WLA Foundation for WLA's Charitable Activities including the Linda J. Murphy Scholarship Fund for women law students.*

If you are enrolling in the Online Directory, please select three of the following practice areas for publication:

Administrative Law	Admiralty/Maritime	Adoption	Advertising	Agricultural
Antitrust & Trade Regulation	Appeals	Arbitration/Mediation	Banking & Finance	Bankruptcy
Business Litigation	Civil Litigation	Civil Rights Constitutional Law	Collaborative Law	Collections
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Corporations/Not for Profits	Criminal Prosecution	Criminal Defense	Disability Law	Elder Law
Election Law	Employment Discrimination - Employees	Employment Discrimination - Employers	Entertainment & Sports Law	Environmental Law
Family Law/Divorce/Custody & Support	General Practice	Government/Municipal Law	Health Law	Immigration
Insurance Defense	International Law	Internet/Technology	Judicial	Labor & Employment - Employers
Labor & Employment - Employees	Landlord/Tenant	Legal Aid	Legislative/Political	Medical Malpractice
Medicare/Medicaid	Military Law	Patent Law	Pensions/Employment Benefits	Trademark & Copyright
Personal Injury	Legal Malpractice	Public Interest	Railroad	Real Estate
Retired	Regulatory/Licensing	School/Education	Securities	Social Security
Taxation	Traffic	Wills/Trusts/Estate Planning	Workers' Compensation	Legal Placement

IS THERE STILL A NEED FOR A WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION?

Check out these highlights from the 2009 Missouri Bar Economic Survey*
and then you decide

- “. . . on average males in full-time private practice earn nearly double what females earn.”
- Male lawyers in private practice reported an average income of \$200,179 while their female counterparts reported an average income of \$109,343;
- Full time male sole practitioners reported an average income of \$115,499 while their female counterparts reported a mean income of \$65,628;
- In considering all areas of practice, women consistently earn less than their males counterparts and the discrepancy increases as income increases:
 - 171 males reported earning between \$90,000 - \$119,000 vs. 96 women;**
 - 120 males reported earning between \$120,000 - \$149,000 vs. 46 women;
 - 105 males reported earning between \$150,000 - \$179,00 vs. 27 women;
 - 81 males reported earning between \$180,000 - \$209,999 vs. 18 women;
 - 70 males reported earning between \$210,000 - \$269,999 vs. 12 women;
 - Out of 1229 lawyers who reported they were in private practice, 207 males and only 43 women reported being partners in their firms;

Of the 5000 randomly-chosen responders, 67% were male and 33% were female; 95.7% of the respondents were Caucasian.

WLA is committed to improving the status of women lawyers in all aspects of our lives and this includes working to ensure equal pay for equal work. We need your help - join a committee, attend an event, renew your dues or enlist a friend today!

*The Surveyors indicate that the results are non-scientific; may not reflect the economic down-turn in late 2008 & 2009; should be used as a guide and not a standard, and, should be viewed in their entirety to avoid any misconstruing of any one particular fact.

**5,000 people responded in total.

Current WLA Endorsements

- ◆ For the future opening on the United States Court of Appeals, Eastern District of Missouri: Nanette Baker
- ◆ For the opening on the 21st Circuit Judicial Commission: Matt Rossiter

2009 Red Carpet Fashion Show Fundraiser Wrap-Up (continued from P. 1)

I am pleased to announce that Legal Advocates for Abused Women (LAAW) were the recipients of BoostMobile phones and phones card donated by the very generous Carey Davis of the Pittsburg Steelers (son of our own Annette Slack). Additionally, the net proceeds raised from this event will go to Redevelopment Opportunities for Women (ROW) and LSEM's Lasting Solutions. These worthy organizations did not request assistance but our support in the current economy is especially necessary. In 2007,



Attorney Vanessa Brown, Model/Attorney Todd Gampp, WLA President Nicole Colbert-Botchway, and Model/Actor Joel King.



Model/Attorney and event Co-Chair Genevieve Frank shows the latest from Macy's.

ROW provided services to more than 875 families in the St. Louis area, including programs for family literacy, life skills education, domestic violence counseling, financial literacy, individual development accounts, and community consulting. Lasting Solutions Program assists clients who seek a lasting solution to ending the problem of family violence in their lives and is devoted to helping clients as they rebuild their lives.



Model/Attorney Reuben Shelton and Attorney Doreen Dodson enjoy great appetizers and drinks from Mosaic.

Finally , I want to give a special thanks to our planning committee: Jessica Liss, Dale M. Weppner, Gen Frank, Joan Swartz, Debbie Weaver, Kathy Porter, Lisa Herder, Zoe Lyle, Heather Hays, Felicia Williams, Joe Frank, Rocky Aliberti, James Sewell and Jennifer Joyce. Thanks also go to the Event Hosts: Janelle McClure, Fitzann Reid, Adrian Smith, Sheena Hamilton, Adam Weaver, Eric Kukowski, Fibbens Koranteng, Nancy Hopp and Judy Lehman.



WLA Secretary Kristine Bridges asks Model/Attorney Annette Slack, "Can your son get me tickets?"



Model/Attorneys Bruce Hopson and Marjorie Carter work the red carpet with style.



The Honorable Patricia Cohen, Attorney Hope Whitehead and the Honorable Kristine Kerr enjoy an evening of fashion and fun.



The Honorable Nanette Baker and WLA President-Elect Jessica Liss discuss the red carpet moves of their fellow members of the

Women Lawyers' Association of Greater St. Louis

P.O. Box 1428
St. Louis, MO 63188
Email: wlastl@wlastl.org



Don't forget to renew your membership?

WLA Mission Statement. Our mission is to:

- Promote and assist women in obtaining positions of influence and leadership within their workplace, the legal profession, the judiciary, and the community.
- Raise awareness of and combat biases against women within the community at large, the legal profession, and under the law.
- Advocate for diversity, equality, and justice under the law and within the legal system.
- Support women lawyers in their personal and professional lives.
- Provide opportunities for volunteerism and advocacy on issues affecting women.
- Collaborate with other individuals and organizations to improve the status of women.

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

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