

Westchester

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INSIDE



Women's Bar Association

A Chapter of the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York

AN EVENING TO REMEMBER

Lonya A. Gilbert

On November 9th, 2005 the Westchester Women's Bar sponsored a celebratory dinner for our beloved Judge Sondra Miller at the Glen Island Harbor Club in New Rochelle. The entire evening was resplendent with excellent food, dancing, and tributes to an incredible woman.



Hon. Sondra Miller with her Husband Stan Gelfman.

The co-chairs of the dinner Glenn E. Simpson and Dawn K. Arnold spearheaded the introductions and were followed by such distinguished speakers as the Hon. Judith S. Kaye, Hon. A. Gail Prudenti, Hon Jonathan Lippman, Jody Fay, Andrea Phoenix, and Judge Miller's daughter, Miriam Reback. Everyone who spoke lauded Judge Miller for all her remarkable achievements, along with her incredible persona. As her daughter said she truly is a woman who "can have her cake and eat it too."



Chief Judge Judith Kaye

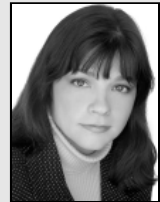
Over four hundred and fifty people attended the gala, which is pure evidence of how much of an impact Judge Miller has made on all of us in the profession.

Of course, Judge Miller will not be spending her time off the bench sitting idly by. She was appointed as a director of a new division of the Office of Court Administration which is called the "family

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A Message From The President

Justice Sondra Miller - her name evokes smiles, praise and many, many good things. The



Jody Fay

Westchester Women's Bar Association had the honor of being asked to assist Judge Miller's family and staff with a dinner in celebration of her illustrious career. A celebration of her career on the bench, that is. It was a sensational event held on November 9th at The Glen Island Harbour Club. There were so many judges in attendance, including Keynote Speaker Chief Justice Judith Kaye. It was impossible to recognize all the judges.

I am sure you all join me in wishing Judge Miller all the best in her soon to be endeavors off the bench. She certainly has quite a history to build upon! One last note on Judge Miller's Dinner - I need to thank those of our members who helped make it possible. Many thanks to Dawn Arnold (Dinner Co-Chair), Dolores Gebhardt and Lonya Gilbert (Dinner Journal Co-Chairs), Susan Damplo (Cen-

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SAVE THE DATE!

Holiday Party

December 14, 2005 - 5:30-7:30pm

The Woman's Club of White Plains



Westchester
Women's
Bar
Association

MEMBER NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER, 2005

Published Monthly by the
Westchester Women's
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the Women's Bar Association
of the State of New York

2005/2006

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Golf Outing	Claire Meadow Kathy N. Rosenthal	WWBA Delegate to WBASNY Mentoring Program	Marcia Smithen-Cohen
Holiday Party	Joy S. Joseph, Roberta Michael		

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

from page 1

terpieces), our WWBA Treasurer Adrienne Orbach and our WWBA Executive Director Linda Surace. Judge Miller's party was magnificent, in no small part thanks to these women.

Now onto more events and excitement. Our November 16th General Membership Meeting: "Ethics for Government Attorneys" was a huge success. Deborah Scalise and Dolores Gebhardt (where does she find the time?) organized the event and it was not just for government attorneys. We had so many attendees it was standing room only! Many thanks to our sponsors of the event, The Bank of New York and Attorney's Title Insurance Agency, Inc. for their generosity.

Speaking of generous members - 'tis the season you know. I know that I am preaching to the choir in most cases, but a little gentle reminder never hurt anyone. A great way to spread your generous spirit would be to bring an unwrapped gift (for a teenager) to the WWBA Holiday Party on December 14th. As it is every year, The Holiday Party is free to WWBA members. Joy Joseph and Beth Willensky have organized a terrific party complete with a holiday shopping bazaar. Please look inside the newsletter for further details on the party.

Lastly, the elections are over, at least for this year.....unless, well, you all know the ugly details and disputed elections. I congratulate those of you (if you ran) who won and my consolations to those of you who lost. As I get older the lines on my face run deeper but the lines that separate political parties seem to have softened. I am a registered party voter but I am realizing the ever important task of voting for the person. I suppose this is due in large part to The Westchester Women's Bar Association. I have made many friends in our wonderful association. They are in politics; and I like them and want each of them to win his or her election race. It is an overlooked concept in our world to look "to the person" in all of our dealings, not just politics.

Here's wishing each of you a fulfilling holiday season and hopes for a healthy New Year.

Speak to you in 2006! ♦

The WWBA invites you to place your business ad in the 2005/2006 WWBA directory



See the subscription form insert for more info.

ATTENTION MEMBERS

Pursuant to the By-Laws of the WWBA, the Nominating Committee is composed of four (4) elected members plus the current President. The proposed slate of candidates for the nominating committee is: Kathleen Donelli, Immediate Past President, Lucille Fontana, Kathy N. Rosenthal, Dawn Arnold, and Jody Fay, current President, ex officio. Any WWBA member wishing to nominate someone, including him or herself, must contact our WWBA Corresponding Secretary, Julie Kattan in writing no later than December 1, 2005. Julie can be reached at: phone: 914.686-0108, fax: 914.288.9291; or by e-mail at juliek0601@aol.com. A vote to elect the nominating committee for the year 2006 will take place at the General Membership Meeting to be held on January 11, 2006 at The Bank of New York, 123 Main Street, 4th floor, White Plains, NY @ 5:30 P.M. ♦

Correction

Editor's apologies

The author of the article "NYSBA Special Committee on Balanced Lives Holds Westchester Forum" was submitted by Angela Gianini, Esq. ♦

Making Dates and Getting Published

Please schedule all WWBA dates through Julie S. Kattan, Corresponding Secretary and Editor-in-Chief of the WWBA Newsletter. Please copy or otherwise notify Susan S. Brown, Vice President, with all dates to be included in the WWBA website calendar, at ssbrownesq@msn.com or by facsimile at 914-288-9291. Conflicts in scheduling will be assessed on a case by case basis, with priority for early submissions.

The deadline for newsletter submissions (substantive law articles, notes on members, committee notices) to be considered for publication in the newsletter is the twelfth of the month. All notices must be in writing, preferably e-mailed to juliek0601@aol.com. Attachments should be sent in Word or WordPerfect format. If you do not have e-mail capability, please mail or fax your submission to Julie at Glassman & Brown, LLP, 99 Court Street, White Plains, NY 10601, Telephone (914) 686-0108, Fax (914) 288-9291

Any opinions expressed in the articles contained herein are solely those of the author(s) and do not constitute positions taken by the WWBA. ♦

Navigating Detours on the Road to Success

A Lawyer's Guide to Career Planning

Amy Gewirtz, Esq.

Pace Law School Alumni and Westchester Women's Bar Association (WWBA) members gathered at the New York State Judicial Institute on the Pace Law School campus on November 7th for a program entitled "Navigating Detours on the Road to Success: A Lawyer's Guide to Career Planning." The program, co-sponsored by the Pace Law School Center for Career Development and the WWBA Placement Committee, featured Kathleen Brady, founder and principal of Brady & Associates Career Planners, LLC in New York City, and author of the recently published book of the same title.

Drawing upon her prior professional experiences as Assistant

Dean of Career Services at Fordham Law School, National Director of Staff Recruitment and Development at Jackson Lewis, Manager of Associate Professional Development at Milbank Tweed Hadley & McCloy, LLP, and past president of NALP, Ms. Brady discussed ways to create a roadmap for professional and personal success. She frequently referred to colorful "driving" imagery as a way of illustrating her points, noting that detours, speed bumps and potholes will be an inevitable part of this process. On average, people will change their careers 3 times and their jobs 10 times before retiring. Transitions are inevitable and therefore, it is crucial to have your own personal definition of success, not that imposed by soci-

ety, family or any other outside forces. Once you are clear on what success means to you, you can then begin to create and implement an action plan. She encouraged the audience to plan a career in the same way they would approach planning a vacation—think about where and how they might like to spend time; do research; talk to people who might have been where you would like to go; get maps. It is important to be patient and not be afraid to fail, Ms. Brady said, citing Elvis Presley and Oprah Winfrey as two famous "initial failures" as examples. Effective communication is crucial to success—in order to communicate effectively, you must learn to listen to others. One way of listening is via networking. It is vital to career

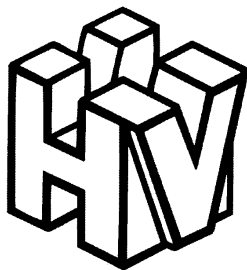
success to go out there and meet others who may have helpful information to impart about the career path you are considering. Ms. Brady strongly encouraged the use of networking as an important part of the action plan, noting that 80% of jobs are achieved this way.

Ms. Brady also discussed the concept of goal setting, and suggested three types of goals: lifetime, (10-12 things you'd like to accomplish in your lifetime); five-year plan, (4-5 things you'd like to accomplish in the next 5 years) and annual goals (2-3 things you'd like to accomplish in the next year)—all of these should be reviewed once a year.

Ms. Brady's message was di-

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December Practice Management Tip

Employee Training: Guaranteed to be One of Your Firm's Best Investments

In 1986, a law firm asked me to figure out why its staggering investment in a state-of-the-art word processing system had not resulted in increased productivity or reduced staffing levels. It took me very little time to determine that lack of training was the problem.

Staff was using the equipment and software like electronic typewriters. And in many cases, the lack of training actually caused people to produce work slower than they would have on an actual typewriter. The investment was more a liability than asset. In fact, I theorized that the firm's staggering 67% employee turnover rate was in some part directly attributable to the technology implementation.

The managing partner and executive committee were not convinced. From their perspective, people were busily producing work on the equipment provided. Moreover, they felt that having state-of-the-art technology would draw and keep people at the firm. Nonetheless, I was given a free hand, albeit non-existent budget, to devise and implement a training program.

The training program included specific task-related software training. By that I mean that the people being trained were asked to provide input on what tasks they needed to perform with the software on a regular basis, and the training was specifically designed to address those tasks. Regular feedback and additional discussion with staff revealed a whole host of related areas—procedures and other equipment—which required codification and

more training.

The training program expanded over time to include not just the word processing system, but copiers, fax machines, telephone and voice mail, cost control equipment, time and billing and accounting procedures, file opening and closing procedures, and so forth.

Current employees began to participate in the training and orientation of new employees. And in doing so, they both improved their skills further, and made additional suggestions on how to improve the program. New employees were surveyed at the end of their 90-day introductory period to determine how effective the training and orientation program was, and how it might be improved. Continual tweaking fine-tuned the process.

The impact of the training and orientation program became quickly apparent. Turnover dropped dramatically. In one year it fell from 67% to around 35%. In another year turnover was further reduced to 17%. By the end of the third year turnover was less than 5%, which was lower than the average for the geographic region.

As turnover reduced, morale improved for both staff and attorneys. Unexpectedly, the attorney turnover rate started to drop as well. Profitability improved significantly.

“Effective training performs a dual function: it educates people and it motivates them to work harder and better.”

During the same time, productivity increased dramatically, and staffing ratios began to morph. The firm was able to migrate from an attorney/secretary ratio of 1:1 to a 1.5:1 ratio by the end of the second year. After almost four years the ratio was mostly 2:1. This further enhanced profitability.

There is no doubt that training and productivity are strongly related concepts. They go hand in hand. But it goes much further than that. Effective training performs a dual function: it educates people and it motivates them to work harder and better. There is a reward that organizations reap when they pay attention to people and show them the organization is concerned about them. In simpler terms, we know that people spend such a large portion of their daily lives at work that they need to have a sense of belonging, of being a vital part of a team. When they do, they produce better. It's simple motivation: pushing the right buttons to benefit both employee and employer.

There have been actual studies regarding the effects of training. Results of one such study on human and social capital were presented at a Joint Conference of the European Commission and European Investment Bank in late 2003. The study measured the

rates of return on training capital in terms of value added to the organization, taking into account any reduction in value due to an increase in the separation rate. (I find that one of the chief concerns of investing in training is that employers fear it will make employees more valuable in the marketplace and therefore increase turnover. This study took this factor into account.) The results? In France the ROI was 288%. In Sweden it was a whopping 441%. The conclusion regarding investing in training of employees reached in the study stated “. . . Enterprise training . . . appears to favor innovation, and this should be the source of rises in productivity and competitiveness. Moreover the rates of return are provocatively high.”

A study by an organization called VitalSmart, conducted at Sprint (a Fortune 100 company), showed that productivity improved 93% with an investment in employee and management training. As if that wasn't enough, customer care improved, the external image of the company as an employer improved, turnover reduced, and client satisfaction ratings were significantly higher.

continued on next page

Employee Training: One of your Firm's Best Investments

from previous page

I have been designing and implementing training and orientation programs for law firms for almost 25 years. In every single instance, the return on investment on the part of the firm has been far-reaching and significant, often in surprising ways.

The simple fact is that today's more powerful software programs are more complex. And that includes Word and WordPerfect. In order to get the "bang for the buck" out of your investment, you need to train. Then train again. Then do follow-up training. Studies show that people, no matter how smart, and no matter how adept the trainer, will only retain about 40% of what they've been trained in. And that 40% is a "use it or lose it" proposition—if you don't put the newfound knowledge to work immediately, retention starts to drop dramatically and quickly. Hence the need for repeated retraining.

Similarly, our firms have become increasingly complex organizations. It's no longer realistic to expect people to "just know" what to do. If you want to hold onto people, and if you want to maximize productivity and profitability, you need to invest in people to ensure that they can hit the ground running, and have the stamina to go the distance. Your firm will always reap a greater reward than its actual investment. ♦

This month's Practice Management Tip was provided by Ellen Freedman, Law Practice Management Coordinator of the Pennsylvania Bar Association and President of Freedman Consulting, Inc., an Ambler, Pennsylvania firm which provides a wide range of law firm practice management services to small and mid-size firms. Ms. Freedman may be reached through her website at www.PA-LawFirmConsulting.com.

Notes on Members

Susan M. Damplo and Deborah A. Scalise were presenters at the NYSBA's CLE program on New York Appellate Practice, which was held at the Westchester Marriott in Tarrytown on October 28, 2005. Ms. Scalise addressed "Ethical Considerations for Appellate Counsel," and Ms. Damplo spoke on "Brief Writing and Oral Argument." Ms. Damplo also chaired the daylong program.

Lisa Solomon is thrilled to announce the launch of The Billable Hour™ Company, which sells watches and clocks that divide the hour into six-minute increments—the same way lawyers bill their time. Lisa and her partner (and husband), Mark, are partners in the company, which offers two watch styles—a black leather band or a gold-tone band—and two desk clock models. The timepieces are sold exclusively through the company's website: www.TheBillableHour.com. ♦

Classifieds

Employment Opportunities

Attorney located in Mount Kisco is seeking a part-time attorney, possibly leading to full-time, in the areas of Matrimonial/Family law and Real Estate. Salary negotiable. Please fax resume to 845 278-5989.

Daniel J. Sweeney and Assoc. in Pleasantville, N.Y. is looking for a part time attorney experienced in working on motions and appeals primarily in the Insurance Defense area. Must be willing to work 1-2 days per week in conjunction with another part-time attorney on a job share basis. Very few, if any, Court appearances required. Please call Robin at 914-747-5507 to set up an interview. ♦

New York City Bar Association's Law Practice Management Symposium

On November 1, 2005, the New York City Bar Association had its 2nd Annual Law Practice Management Symposium entitled "Putting It All Together: Building a Successful Law Practice," and the Westchester Women's Bar Association was a participating bar association in the event. Lisa M. Bluestein, a sole practitioner, WWBA member, and the part-time Small Law Firm Center Director for the NYC Bar, reported that approximately 200 attendees had the opportunity to meet with over 30 exhibitors in the legal services and products industry, attend 11 workshops on practice management issues ranging from office space to technology to career satisfaction. The event was capped off by a CLE program presented by Jay Foonberg, the author of several practice management books that are offered through the ABA. ♦

AN EVENING TO REMEMBER

The Westchester Women's Bar Association Honors Hon. Sondra Miller

services division" whose purpose is to monitor all systems affecting families and children, while simultaneously serving as a think tank for fixing the system. Additionally, it will assist in implementing the changes that will be recommended by the Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye once the Miller commission produces its report.

As if that wasn't enough, it was announced at the dinner that Judge Miller is becoming Pace University School of Law's first ever Jurist in residence, and will be offering her knowledge and experience to both students and faculty alike.

We all wish Judge Miller the best of luck in all her endeavors and look forward to her leadership and guidance for many more years to come. ♦

A Lawyer's Guide to Career Planning

from page 4

rect, upbeat and optimistic. She clearly conveyed her personal philosophy that "when you really want something, you can do it. You can overcome obstacles...don't be afraid to readjust and sally forth."

Ms. Brady's book, "Navigating Detours on the Road to Success: A Lawyer's Guide to Career Planning," can be ordered from Inkwater

Press at www.inkwaterbooks.com. Further information about Ms. Brady and Brady & Associates Career Planners, LLC can be found at www.careerplanners.net. ♦

Amy Gurwitz, Esq. is Associate Director, Alumni Counseling and Relations, Pace Law School, and co-chair, WWBA Placement Committee.

W W B A N e w M e m b e r s

The Westchester Women's Bar Association proudly welcomes our newest members:

JANE ANN NOLAN AINBINDER, ESQ.

100 Mitchell Road
Somers, New York 10589
(914) 276-7882

*Bankruptcy, Entertainment,
Litigation (Civil/Commercial), Real Estate*

KATHERINE W. DANDY, ESQ.

96 Stanwood Road
Bedford Corners, New York 10549
(914) 241-0805

E-mail: kathy.dandy@gmail.com
*Appellate Practice, Corporate/Commercial,
Litigation (Civil/Commercial), Utilities*

CHIOMA DEERE

4392 Byron Avenue
Bronx, New York 10466
(917) 650-8691

E-mail: chiomadeere@hotmail.com
Law Student

KEN HALDENSTEIN

Pace Law School
78 North Broadway
Dean's Suite, Room 302
White Plains, New York 10603
(914) 422-4127

E-mail: khaldenst@aol.com
Graduate Awaiting Admission

SUSAN E. HART, ESQ.

Newman & Newman LLP
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E-mail: gjngjn@aol.com
*Domestic Violence, Family Law,
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JENNIFER KIM

200-07 46th Avenue
Bayside, New York 11361
(718) 225-8647

E-mail: jk1022@aol.com
Law Student

ELIZABETH LASH

9 Maria Lane
Ossining, New York 10562
(914) 391-9365

E-mail: lash.32@osu.edu
Law Student

SUSAN LUTINGER

Two South Road, No. 2R
Harrison, New York 10528
(917) 301-2200

E-mail: lutinger_susan@hotmail.com
Law Student

LISA MAN

78 North Broadway
Dannat Hall - Room 408
White Plains, New York 10603
(703) 371-3425

E-mail: lisa_man03@yahoo.com
Law Student



ALEXANDRA MAXWELL

102 Lakeview Avenue
West Harrison, New York 10604
(301) 802-5468

E-mail: amm111@columbia.edu
Graduate Awaiting Admission

LEAH L. MURPHY, ESQ.

Silverberg Zalantis LLP
Three Barker Avenue
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E-mail: murphy@szlawfirm.net
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SUSAN ROSTI

78 North Broadway, Room 423
White Plains, New York 10603
(862) 485-0749

E-mail: srosti@law.pace.edu
Law Student

ROBIN STIEBEL, ESQ.

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White Plains, New York 10601
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E-mail: rstiebel@lshv.org
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WWBA Schedule of Upcoming Events

Sponsor	Date / Time	Place	Topic	RSVP
WWBA Board Meeting	Wednesday 12/7/05 5:30 p.m.	Bank of NY 123 Main Street White Plains	Board Meeting	To Jody Fay
WWBA Holiday Party	Wednesday 12/14/05 5:30-7:30 pm	Women's Club of White Plains (CV Rich Mansion)	Holiday Party	No charge – bring a gift
WWBA Board Meeting & Gen. Membership meeting	Wednesday 1/11/06 5:30 p.m.	Bank of NY 123 Main Street White Plains	International Women's Rights	To Jody Fay

Other Important Events

SPONSOR	DATE/TIME	PLACE	TOPIC	RSVP
Westchester County Human Rights Commission	Friday 12/9/05 \$15 8:00-10:30 am	Reid Castle Manhattanville College Purchase, NY	Breakfast and Award Ceremony	Contact Ann Muro WCHRC 914-995-7713



SAVE THE DATE

THURSDAY, APRIL 6, 2006

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~ Honoring ~

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<p>PAT LANZA Benefactor of Justice Award</p>	<p>ERNEST S. PRINCE Community Service Award</p>

Rye Town Hilton • 6:00 Cocktails • 7:00 Dinner

Dinner Co Chairs: BJ Harrington, Bleakley Platt and Schmidt • Gus Katsoris, Fordham Law School • James Gill, Bryan Cave



WWBA is a chapter of WBASNY which is an approved provider of CLE credit. Full and partial scholarships for CLE programs based on financial need are available. For information on the guidelines and procedures for applying, please contact the person running the program. All requests are strictly confidential. All programs are for transitional credit unless the program states otherwise.



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AT WWW.WBASNY.ORG.**