Women in the Profession

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Success: Women Attorneys Must Write Their Own Definition

BY BARBARA T. SICALIDES
Special to the Legal, PLW

It’s 8 a.m. You have just spent the last 30 minutes arguing the toughest case of your life but finally carried your point: Pajamas are not appropriate school attire.

At the office, a client whose trial begins in less than a week has decided to change strategies, and you doubt whether you will get any sleep between now and opening arguments. That afternoon, you drive to New Jersey to present a pitch to a potential client. By 5:30 p.m., you are racing home to pick the kids up from karate and make your daughter’s caterpillar costume for the fifth-grade play, a laptop and a file box in tow. At 1:30 a.m. you put down your pen, wonder why you do it and, not for the first time, question your decision to practice law.

Most women attorneys constantly juggle professional and home lives in an attempt to make both “perfect.” But perfection and success often seem elusive and some women lawyers may wonder whether staying in the profession is the right decision — for herself and for her family. As I am not a career counselor, the following is not from that perspective; it is based on my personal experience and observations — and a few of my own mistakes made along the way.

The challenges of building a practice and the responsibilities for home often conflict. For women, these obligations can weigh heavily enough that no matter how hard they work, they wonder whether they should be doing more in both arenas. Some women begin to believe that success at home and in the workplace can never be achieved simultaneously, triggering anxiety and an exodus from the profession, which can leave women unfulfilled and the legal community poorer for their departure.

FLEXIBLE BY DESIGN

But a more flexible definition of success can make all the difference — and keep women lawyers doing what they love — both at home and in the office.

Many in the legal community measure success by income and practice size. But success can be more than that, and may be measured in a variety of ways, including reputation, courtroom and negotiated victories, and the ability to work on the great cases — the kind of work that is not only fun, but fulfilling. Success, by my definition, is finding the things you love and then doing an incredibly good job at them — even if traditionally they are not designed to make the most money or garner the biggest office.

There is no single answer or “right way” to make a legal career compelling and satisfying. And there’s no “right way” for a woman to ensure that she is the best mother or spouse. What there is, is your own definition of success. It is your way of doing it right and making what is important to you a priority.

So what is the definition of success?

It is entirely up to you. Don’t misunder-
Words of Wisdom for a Mid-Level Associate

BY JAIME S. TUITE
AND SUSAN A. YOHE
Special to the Legal, PLW

Tuite: I have been practicing law as an associate in a large firm for five years now. What amazes me is that while actually practicing law has become easier with experience, managing the overall expectations and demands has become much more difficult over time.

I greatly enjoy practicing law. I could not ask for more interesting work, and I appreciate the collegial atmosphere. But I am beginning to wonder if I am willing to make personal sacrifices that are likely necessary to achieve my career goals. This is a struggle that I know I’m not the first to have, as statistics show great numbers of women with law degrees opting for part-time schedules or alternative career paths.

With my 30th birthday approaching and a desire to have a family on my mind, the main question is: Will I, like others at the firm, be able to excel in my profession and dedicate the time and energy that I desire to my family life, or does it make sense to explore the other energy that I desire to my family life, or does it make sense to explore the other career and professional — where would you like to be in 10 years?

Yohe: From a career standpoint, I am uncertain. Most days, I would like to be a shareholder with lots of trial experience and a solid client base. Other days, having a full-time, reduced-hour schedule with a senior associate or of counsel status seems more palatable. I want trial work and would not be happy in a backseat position in litigation. But maybe reaching to become a shareholder and all that entails means my career is a priority over my family, and that makes me uncomfortable. Maybe if I were a man, I would not feel that way. I would be reach for the top and provide my family with the best. There are clearly different societal expectations for the sexes.

From a personal standpoint, in 10 years, I see my husband and I celebrating our first decade of marriage and having two or three children. I see myself involved in the community, and spending time with my family. I also see myself with a full-time nanny and a cleaning person!

Yohe: We all — even people my age — like a clear path ahead of us and the confidence of knowing that if we just stick to the path, we’ll get where we want to go. The truth is that we really can’t be sure even where we want to go, let alone precisely how to get there.

There’s no reason why today you shouldn’t try to reach the highest rung you can imagine in your career. There’s also no reason why you can’t change your mind about your goal if your circumstances change or if it seems, along the way, that the sacrifices are too great for you as an individual. I’m certainly not counseling being cavalier about your commitments to your employer and colleagues, but I am saying that you don’t have to decide today what path you may choose to be on 10 years from now.

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Can Women Get the Plum Opportunities in Law Firms?
(And Avoid Getting the Plum Skins?)

BY HARRIE SAMARAS AND MARLA TOCKER
Special to the Legal, PLW

ew York Supreme Court Justice Samuel Hofstadler, addressing a bar association dinner in 1957 on gender inequality in hiring practices in law firms, was quoted as stating, “In a field as highly specialized as law, competence and ability grow with opportunity,” according to Karen Berger Morello.

Hofstadler’s statement is as true today as it was in the ’50s. Over time, however, the blatant hiring discrimination of the ’50s was replaced by a more subtle form of discrimination in the opportunities made available to women attorneys after they were hired.

FRUITS OF THE FIRMS

Despite the almost even balance of men and women law school graduates, only a handful of women associates seem to make it to partner or into other areas of firm management, particularly in major law firms. Additionally, attrition rates for women attorneys seem to surpass the attrition rates for their male counterparts. So why are so many well-qualified women who dominate the top rankings in their law schools not making it to partner or leaving their law firms? The answer, in part, may be due to the fact that women lawyers, no matter how experienced or qualified, often find that they do not receive the plum opportunities.

Gone are the days when firms can claim that they do not receive the plum opportunities. Gone are the days when firms can claim truthfully that they cannot find good women attorneys. Nonetheless, firms are having difficulty holding onto women attorneys who leave their firms in search of the opportunities they need to grow professionally and to achieve their goals.

Fortunately, the trend continues to change for various reasons, including the perseverance of women attorneys and incentives both internal and external to firms. Firms recognize that the loss of women attorneys, who may represent some of their best legal talent, adversely affects their bottom line.

Furthermore, corporate clients, in increasing numbers, are requiring that their counsel meet the same standards on diversity that they have implemented within their corporations. Not only are these companies insisting that their law firms be diverse, they are also insisting that their legal teams be diverse and that, when appropriate, women and minorities are not relegated to minor roles on major projects.

Change is also being implemented by firms that value women lawyers not merely as women, but as lawyers with talent, leadership, management and client skills. Many of these firms have made a commitment to identify sources of gender bias and to implement positive changes in their firm culture and environment.

TAKING ACTION

What affirmative steps can interested firms take to attract and maintain women attorneys?

From all levels of the hierarchy, firms must sincerely want to have women attorneys play integral roles in their business and practice. That is, as with the hiring of any attorney, the firm must value the skills, talent and experience a particular woman attorney who is a new father? Is a woman attorney who is a new mother? Is a woman with a change of work ethic than a male attorney who is a new father? Is a woman who has to leave work early in the evening for a child-related responsibility perceived differently than a man who does the same? The age old assumption that women are a poor investment because they will leave their firms to raise children is an institutional myth that costs women opportunities and may lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy. People must be judged as individuals, not by what they may do or may not do solely on the basis of gender.

Likewise, another gender-based prophecy. People must be judged as individuals, not by what they may do or may not do solely on the basis of gender.

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It Is What It Is … Darling!

Being a Lady Lawyer, Being a Good Lawyer

BY BONNIE S. STEIN
Special to the Legal, PLW

J ust breathe — I had to keep reminding myself. I was driving to my very first trial in a rural county more than three hours from Houston. Fortunately or unfortunately, this drive gave me plenty of time to think.

In Texas, every civil trial in 1987 was a jury trial, unless waived by the plaintiff, and this $3,000 fender bender jury trial was all mine to defend. Obviously, the attorney at the small Texas firm where I worked perceived me to be capable, since he had given me this file (consisting of less than 25 pages) on Thursday for a jury trial to begin on Monday. That was confidence in me — right?

With a million thoughts racing through my head on what seemed to be an endless drive, I spent — a real lawyer at the age of 35, working lawyer. That was confidence in me — right?

In T exas, every civil trial in 1987 was a jury trial, unless waived by the plaintiff, and this $3,000 fender bender jury trial was all mine to defend. Obviously, the attorney at the small T exas firm where I worked perceived me to be capable, since he had given me this file (consisting of less than 25 pages) on Thursday for a jury trial to begin on Monday. That was confidence in me — right?

Of course, on the endless drive, I spent time reflecting on how I got to be where I was — a real lawyer at the age of 35, working lawyer. Early for the 9 a.m. trial, I had to wait for the courtroom to be unlocked, and I continued my trial preparation in the hallway. Finally, I was in the courtroom and gazed at the carved wood and the majestic beauty of the hundred-year-old courtroom. Time passed slowly until I heard the door into the courtroom open and turned to see my adversary for the first time. I was surprised to see an older gentleman in snakeskin cowboy boots (with a heel!), a belt buckle almost the size of Texas, a string tie and a Stetson hat which he rested on the table with his file — consisting of a few sheets of paper. When the judge entered the courtroom, I was even more surprised to see boots (with a higher heel!) and a string tie with a turquoise lariat outside the black robe. As the two gentlemen exchanged pleasantries, suddenly my preparation seemed overdone and my attire seemed out of place.

The judge started the pre-trial process and my adversary spoke first, presenting his pre-trial comments. Finally, it was my turn to address the court. I stood and began to speak, only to be quickly interrupted by my adversary, who wanted to correct what I was saying based on his perception of the facts.

Did I hear him right? Little lady? Darling?? There are those moments in life that I refer to as “Kodak moments.” Moments when time stands still and the “picture” of the moment, the surroundings and what is occurring, become forever a part of your memories. This experience was a Kodak moment for me.

I instantly realized that this would probably be the first of many times when gender references would be made, and possibly gender would be a factor in my career. In a matter of seconds, I realized I could take offense at being referred to as “little lady.” I could create issues about my adversary being “Sam” while I was a nameless “darling.” I could complain about the fact that Sam had been permitted to address the court from counsel table, while as the “little lady” I was required to approach the bench.

Or, I could deal with it.

In this first gender experience of my legal career, I believed that the judge was only being what he perceived to be courteous. Facts are facts, and I was always going to be a lady, and hopefully always a lawyer. At this point in my life, it was my intention to be a civil trial lawyer. In those few seconds, I realized that as my career in the practice of law continued, I would in all likelihood encounter similar situations.

There would be other times when comments were made that were simply not intended to be offensive and discriminatory. I believed the judge thought he was treating me in the manner he believed a woman should be treated, and he did not...

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Becoming a ‘Litigation Mom’

Can Women Really Succeed at Both Parenting and Lawyering?

BY JENNIFER A.L. BATTLE
Special to the Legal, PLW

S
omehow, despite the fact that I had nine whole months to prepare, moth-
erhood caught me completely off-
guard. It wasn’t just that I had never so
much as changed a diaper before in my
life, or that we didn’t get around to ordering
our baby furniture until so late that I
almost beat it home from the hospital. It
was that I naively underestimated how
much of myself I would give — and want
to give — to this tiny new human being.

As for my career as a litigator, I wasn’t
planning on letting my family life get in
the way of that. I loved being a litigator
and wasn’t about to quit, baby or no baby.

My husband and I would make it work —
we’d find great child care, my husband and
I would stagger our work schedules so one
of us could be with our son as much as pos-
sible, and nobody at work would even
notice I’d been gone.

It was only when I found myself com-
pletely caught up in full-time baby care, obses-
sioning over every diaper, cheering every
minute my son managed to figure out how to
get his thumb in his mouth, and dreading
the thought of leaving him in someone’s
care every day, that it started to sink
in that going back to work and being the
kind of parent I wanted to be all at the
same time might not exactly be a walk in
the park. I have come to realize that while every
parent struggles for balance, this particular
juggling act is especially difficult for pro-
cessionals. As Timothy O’Brien’s recent
New York Times article titled “Why
Do So Few Women Reach the Top of Big
Law Firms?” detailed, many women leave
the practice of law before advancing to
more senior, the
ter or any other role that may be thrown
into the mix.” But at the same time, an
associate planning a long-term career at
her firm needs time to learn from others,
built up mentoring relationships with partners and senior associates, and prove
her worth through good, solid, hard work.

All of that takes a tremendous amount of
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Women in the Profession Roundtable Discussion

JAMES BROGAN is the managing partner of DLA Piper Rudnick Gray Cary’s Philadelphia office. His trial practice involves many areas, including commercial disputes, intellectual property, products liability and toxic torts. This broad experience is the consequence of clients requesting his services in different and complex areas.

SARAH DAVIES is a number of Susan O’Connor’s Philadelphia office and serves as hiring partner for the firm. In that capacity, she is responsible for hiring attorneys at all levels for each of the firm’s 24 offices and overseeing the summer associate program in all offices. Previously, she served as the firm’s diversity chairwoman and still remains on the committee. Davies concentrated her practice in complex commercial litigation, including litigation involving class actions, securities fraud, Uniform Commercial Code transactions, business torts, breach of contract, construction litigation, health care and environmental contamination.

LAURA A. FELDMAN is a shareholder and president of the firm of Feldman & Pinto. Feldman founded the firm in 1991 and has a wide variety of technical experience in medical malpractice, commercial, premises liability, vehicle and retail law. Horn has authored numerous articles and frequently lectures on construction law issues. She is a member of the board of directors of the Philadelphia chapter of the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWC) and is acting as one of the hosts for its annual forum in Philadelphia this year. She also serves as a mentor for young attorneys at the firm.

ROBERT D. FOX is a partner with Markle Gold Katcher & Fox, a Philadelphia-based firm that concentrates in the practice of environmental and land use law. He is the Thomas A. O’Boyle lecturer-on-law at the University of Pennsylvania School of Law and was co-chairperson of the Philadelphia Academies Inc. He is also a member of the firm’s diversity chairwoman and still remains on the committee. Davies concentrated her practice in complex commercial litigation, including litigation involving class actions, securities fraud, Uniform Commercial Code transactions, business torts, breach of contract, construction litigation, health care and environmental contamination.

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SHIRA J. GOODMAN is the associate director of Pennsylvania’s Madison Court, a nonprofit, nonprofit organization working to reform Pennsylvania’s courts. Prior to joining PMC, Goodman worked for five years as an associate in the trial and employment group of Ballard Spence &開放的な文書、 Baptiste & Inge, she serves on the executive board of the Young Lawyers Division of the Philadelphia Bar Association and on the executive council of the Pennsylvania Bar Association’s Committee on Women in the Profession.

JENNIFER M. HORN is a senior associate with Cohen Seglias Pallas Greenhall & Fenouil, which she joined in 2003. Horn concentrates her practice in construction and commercial litigation and real estate law. Horn has authored numerous articles and frequently licenses on construction law issues. She is a member of the board of directors of the Philadelphia chapter of the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWC) and is acting as one of the hosts for its annual forum in Philadelphia this year. She also serves as a mentor for young attorneys at the firm.

LIZ MAGUSCHAK is a partner with McNees Wallace & Nurick, and only the third woman elected to partnership at the firm. She serves as chairwoman of the firm’s education law group and as a member of the labor and employment group. As a mentor, she educates the firm’s associates on balancing both professional and life responsibilities.

HARRIE SAMARAS is of counsel in the Berwyn office of Katten Muchin, where she serves as co-chairwoman of the litigation group. Her practice is focused on litigation, including dispute resolution. Prior to joining the firm, she served as director of intellectual property litigation for a Fortune 500 telecommu-

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nity leave approach has been something that’s just grossly unfair... 

Brogan: I think that one of the places where we could improve is at the top, making more opportunities available for the leadership positions in the firm. ... At some point you have to break the barriers. What we’re trying to do is to ... is make more seats on the policy committee, executive committee available to women, more leadership positions. ... I think we have made some fairly dramatic improvements, but we need to be better at that. We need to make more women partners. ... We need to face up to those challenges and act accordingly.

Fox: I think there’s really three things that are the challenges we face. The first is you cannot penalize towards partnership status for someone taking family leave... 

The second is you’ve got to give real work to the person. You can’t create a “mommy ghetto” and say, “You’re going to get a certain type of work because you’re on part-time,” because that person will not progress...

And the third is part-time means part-time. ... It doesn’t mean we’re going to treat you part-time in terms of your pay and your benefits, but work you full-time, because that’s just not right.

With all that being said, ... the most difficult thing ... is professional development. ... The toughest thing is to make sure that you give them mentoring experiences, the experiences with clients, the professional bar experiences.

Goodman: ... But ... one thing that I hear a lot, especially from more senior women, is they worry that more junior women who want to go part-time don’t understand about obligations to clients. That is never a problem with me or any of my colleagues. ... When there are client emergencies, even if it’s your day off ... you dealt with it. ... There was never, “This is not my time, this is not my problem.” ... It’s difficult to describe, but I got to the point where I felt ... that when a client said to me or a partner said, “I really never realized you were part-time,” that wasn’t a compliment anymore. Partners really liked hearing that from clients about me, but it was a problem. And it was really partly my problem, because I couldn’t figure out how to be part-time.

... I think a lot of it is the burden of the bar experiences.

Davies: ... There [need to be] role models for younger lawyers to look at within the firm. ... I think when you do a reduced-hours schedule, you have to figure out how it works for you. And ... the firm needs to communicate ... exactly what its expectations are.

... One of the things I think is really discouraging is when you look around and the only people who seem to be like you who made it ... made those kinds of choices you really don’t want to make.

Brogan: ... There’s a lot of external pressure that we deal with also, and you...
Our steadfast commitment to diversity is clear in our people and our programs. Since 1997 our Women’s Initiative has brought women together for networking, mentoring and community service. The John J. Gibbons Fellowship in Public Interest & Constitutional Law is a powerful advocate for social causes. Our Diversity Committee increases diversity awareness in the firm and the legal community. Through recruiting, education, and partnerships, we encourage all to be a part. That’s what makes Gibbons diverse…and strong.

Of mankind in general, the parts are greater than the whole. — Aristotle
Continuing its growth efforts, in January, Gibbons expanded its Philadelphia office by the addition of 25 attorneys, seven of whom are women attorneys, from Hecker Brown Sherry & Johnson, a prominent Philadelphia civil litigation boutique law firm. These new attorneys will further strengthen the firm’s Women's Initiative by identifying women in the Philadelphia area who are interested in being a part of the initiative’s unique networking, mentoring and business development programs.

“We are extremely pleased to take this step in the expansion of our Philadelphia operations by joining forces with a firm of the caliber of Hecker Brown and we are confident that this will further enhance our firm’s Women’s Initiative,” said Gibbons Managing Director Patrick C. Duncan, Jr. “The initiative will continue to serve the firm’s women attorneys, as well as women clients and contacts throughout the region with informative programs, mentoring events and networking opportunities.”

The initiative’s unique approach to providing business networking opportunities to professional women is well-recognized and has served as a model for companies seeking to establish their own programs to address issues of importance to professional women.

“The Gibbons Women’s Initiative will be a great resource for executive women in Philadelphia,” stated Madeline M. Sherry, a Director in the Gibbons Philadelphia office. “We are planning to host local programs and join with local organizations to help further the advancement of women in business and the law.”

A Great Place to Work
The firm’s unique Women’s Initiative was among the reasons why Gibbons was named one of the Best Places to Work in NJBIZ, ranking fourth among the state’s large companies. In this survey and award program, employees are surveyed to provide their input into the working environment, benefits, and other programs offered by the company. Companies must achieve high employee satisfaction in order to receive this honor.

Increasing the Number of Women in Leadership Positions
This year, the firm made history by elevating five women attorneys, two of whom are part-time, to Director and Counsel positions within the firm. With a deep commitment to the development, advancement and support of women attorneys, Gibbons maintains a strong presence of women within the management and executive levels of the firm.

Increasing the Number of Women in Leadership Positions

The Gibbons Women’s Initiative has created a unique mentorship program to all attorneys where they are paired with more senior partners to provide career counseling and identify opportunities for growth. In addition, the Women’s Initiative has created mentoring groups of women attorneys at various levels in the firm that meet on a regular basis on issues of the utmost importance to women as well as legal educational topics. These groups are important networks for the women to discuss professional growth, business development strategies and balancing work needs. Most recently the mentoring groups hosted a scavenger hunt where teams worked together to find the most answers to a challenging list of questions. This event was just one of the planned activities for the year.

Supporting the Community
From the start, the Gibbons Women’s Initiative has supported the communities it serves through participation in major fundraising activities. Recently 10 team members again joined in the Revlon Run/Walk For Women, helping to raise money to benefit women’s cancer research. Past events have raised thousands of dollars for the American Cancer Society’s Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Campaign, Habitat for Humanity and the American Heart Association’s Go Red for Women Campaign, among others.

Recognized Leaders
The initiative’s senior members’ contributions towards the advancement of professional women has been recognized by the business community and leading publications. Many of the firm’s women attorneys have been elected to key leadership roles in leading organizations, and provide valuable assistance to community causes.

“We are heartened by the recognition we have received in the community and by the praise and support our unique program receives from our clients and colleagues with whom we interact,” said Christine Amalfe. “But most importantly we feel that we have demonstrated to women that both company and community leadership is important and we have gone a long way towards realizing our mission,” added Christine Amalfe.

For more information on the Gibbons Women’s Initiative please visit their website at: www.gibbonslaw.com.
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Women in Marketing: A Conversation Between Partners

BY MAUREEN KOWALSKI
AND MARIA GRECO DANAHER
Special to the Legal, PW

In the article below, two female partners with the same firm discuss the issues from their own perspectives. Although their backgrounds and areas of expertise differ, the two have worked together to create protocol for cross-marketing opportunities that can be applied by women in other firms.

Kowalski: I entered the practice of law believing that every lawyer had to know how to golf, and that to successfully reel in a client I needed to excel as a golfer. Because I had never golfed before, I decided to take golf lessons.

My second lesson was memorable. I recall pounding my drive and, to my surprise, watching the ball soar through the air at such a speed that I lost track of it. I turned, anticipating praise from my instructor. What I saw was pure terror on his face when the ball traveled backwards instead of forwards and, by the look in his eyes, barely missed him! My instructor very calmly said that perhaps I should practice on my own a little before I signed up for any additional lessons.

Understanding then that golf might not be my sport, I gave up the idea of client insurance industry for 13 years before practicing law provided first-hand knowledge as to what makes a client tick. As the client, I kept an ongoing list of reasons for retained counsel over others. None of the reasons included gender (or golf expertise!), and I often sent files to lawyers with whom I never socialized.

Kowalski: None of the reasons included gender (or golf expertise!), and I often sent files to lawyers with whom I never socialized. My list included competence, loyalty, trustworthiness, communication skills and rapport. In my analysis, rapport was the number one reason, as it was important to develop an open and honest relationship with these outside lawyers. When a relationship didn’t develop, I stopped making referrals to that person.

Danaher: My background includes an in-house position with a Fortune 100 company, so I can relate to your thoughts about outside counsel. Let’s add to your list one more item: flexibility, both from a legal standpoint and an ability to work with a diverse group of people. As in-house counsel, I found that partnering with outside counsel was easier if the attorney was open-minded and willing to listen.

I’ve also found that flexibility benefits female attorneys in terms of scheduling, alternative marketing efforts and cross-selling.

Kowalski: Let’s talk about cross-selling. As a client, I often found that there were missed opportunities for attorneys who failed to educate me with respect to the expertise of their fellow attorneys. Because many corporations feel that the best way to ensure quality in outside counsel is to hire attorneys who specialize in a narrow area, the way has already been paved for promoting our female colleagues who specialize in their fields.

Danaher: I know just what you mean. As an example, our employment law group often looks for assistance from other firm members who do workers’ compensation, corporate services and health care law. We’ve been able to develop a team approach that is now expected by a number of our clients.

Kowalski: Educating clients on the availability of other practitioners within the firm is a challenge, but it starts with complete cooperation among firm members. Scheduling a series of in-firm seminars with related practice groups is a good way to educate others within the firm regarding in-firm resources and talents, as well as assisting them to stay abreast of the law. Seminars also can be developed for clients, too, as an indication of the various talents within the firm and to show cooperation among the firm’s lawyers.

Danaher: Having a firm marketing committee that includes women partners and associates can help bring together attorneys from different specializations, too. The committee can provide an opportunity for women to share their experiences and successes in cross-marketing the firm’s resources.

Kowalski: You raise a good point. One of the important aspects of cross-marketing with other women is mentoring. Women tend to gravitate to those with similar experiences and, in general, are effective and positive mentors to other women lawyers. Many of my friends have followed “non-traditional” paths to the practice of law and enjoy sharing success with others who have done the same.

Danaher: I think that the non-traditional background helps in cross-marketing, as...
Over the past 10 years, the growth of women entrepreneurs in the United States has been spectacular. According to the most recent data, there are 10.6 million women-owned businesses employing 19.1 million people and generating sales of $2.5 trillion per year.

Women are impacting how business gets done in America. Women-owned businesses are shaping and redefining the workplace, business networks, and our culture. Perhaps most importantly, women entrepreneurs are influencing how the business community, public officials and the media perceive and respond to women in the workforce.

But work remains to be done. Although the federal government set a statutory goal more than 10 years ago — for agencies to award at least 5 percent of all prime and subcontract dollars to women-owned small businesses — that goal has never been met. Despite continued growth in the number and influence of women-owned businesses, they still only receive 3 percent of federal contract dollars.

LEGAL SUPPORT

Although women have started, owned and inherited businesses since the founding of the United States, governmental support for women-owned businesses is a relatively recent phenomenon. Not until 1979 did the U.S. government act to encourage women-owned businesses.

In response to lobbying from women business owners, in 1979, President Jimmy Carter issued an executive order creating a National Women’s Business Enterprise Policy. The executive order also directed all federal agencies to take action to facilitate and strengthen women-owned business enterprises and to ensure full participation by women in the free enterprise system. Unfortunately, the executive order had very little impact on women-owned businesses in the procurement market.

Fortunately, additional efforts were made. In 1983, President Reagan established a President's Advisory Committee on Women’s Business Ownership. Then, in 1988, Congress passed the Women’s Business Ownership Act, establishing the Interagency Committee on Women’s Business Enterprise. That act also created the National Women’s Business Council, a public policy advisory body comprised of women business owners and women’s business association representatives. Its mission was to promote initiatives, policies and programs designed to support women’s business enterprises at all stages of development.

In 1989, the National Foundation for Women Business Owners was established. That private organization — now known as the Center for Women’s Business Research — has amassed an unparalleled body of research-based knowledge about women business owners and their enterprises. The center’s efforts have raised public awareness of important trends in women’s business ownership, highlighted the challenges being faced, and provided facts and figures for use in public education and advocacy efforts. Additional progress was made in 1994, when President Bill Clinton issued a “Memorandum of Continued Commitment to Small, Disadvantaged and Small Women-Owned Businesses in Federal Procurement,” intended to promote contracting opportunities for women entrepreneurs. Publicly committed the entire federal government to a goal of 5 percent of the total value on all prime contract and subcontract awards per fiscal year for women-owned businesses. In addition, the Small Business Administration and 11 other federal agencies launched the Women’s Procurement Pilot Program in 1994 to educate women on business opportunities with the government.

Most significantly, in 1994, the Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act (FASA) set a goal for federal agencies to award at least 5 percent of all prime and subcontract dollars to women-owned small businesses.

Although 5 percent may not seem significant, it far exceeded awards made in prior years. And, in light of the magnitude of government spending (now over $200 billion on goods and services per year), it meant a lot of money would go to women-owned small businesses.

In addition, the Small Business Act, 15 U.S.C. Section 631, requires that all small businesses have the maximum practicable opportunity to participate in providing goods and services to the government. To ensure that small businesses get their fair share, the Small Business Administration (SBA) negotiates annual procurement preference goals with each Federal agency and reviews each agency’s results. The SBA is responsible for ensuring that the statutory government-wide goals are met in the aggregate. Those goals include awarding 5 percent of prime and subcontract awards to women-owned small businesses.

GROWTH OF BUSINESSES

Over the past 10 years, women-owned businesses have increased in economic clout. The number of women-owned businesses has grown at twice the rate of all U.S. businesses, and added jobs at one and one-half times the national average. Between 1997 and 2004, the number of majority-owned, privately held, women-owned small businesses grew.
what your needs are outside of work, don’t sit in your office and wait for others to figure it out too. Take the initiative to talk with your contemporaries, your favorite supervising lawyers, practice group leaders and others who are able to support your efforts to shape your career in a way consistent with your chosen professional and personal goals. Not every conversation will be a complete success, but you will learn something you can use in the future from each one.

What works for you and those in your life today might not work tomorrow. Don’t worry, there won’t always be short-term balance. When the balance feels unworkable, remember that long-term personal and professional fulfillment is the goal. Sometimes we need to make adjustments, be flexible and look back to our goals when making necessary changes at home or at work.

As law firms continue to become more diverse in terms of gender, race, sexual orientation, culture, religion and political affiliations, the fact that there are many acceptable traditional and nontraditional options will become more evident and will permit women and others to feel more comfortable selecting their own paths.

DO YOUR BEST

In the first few years of a law career, everything is new. At the same time, many women are encountering personal issues that are also new — marriage, motherhood or complete financial independence. Confidence is critical at this (and every) stage, and while a senior lawyer may not always offer a pat on the back, it helps to remember that she, too, once had to write her first brief or research her first case. Seek out different practice areas and cases, and work with different people to build your experience. When you find the right fit, concentrate on achieving your potential and have confidence in your ability to become an expert.

HAVE FAITH IN YOURSELF

Intelligence and skills don’t change just because a woman has a baby, needs to pick up a spouse at the airport or wait at home for a plumber. Firms recognize and care about talent and will be flexible in order to keep and grow that talent. Men have passions that take them outside of the office, too. Whether it is coaching Little League, going to their child’s piano recital or playing a round of golf, they find a way. Sometimes our reasons might be different, but we can find a way too.

There is no simple answer that works for everyone (male or female), but if you enjoy your work and remain flexible, you will have a better chance finding solutions that work for you.

MAKE NETWORKING FUN

Our profession often requires networking and marketing. Try not to see it as just an additional responsibility if asked or expected to network and generate your own business. Instead, find ways to combine networking activities with enjoyable activities; you may actually look forward to it. Find opportunities that allow you to write or talk about the cases or topics that you enjoy. Seek out trade associations that have issues you like to solve and network based on what makes you happy.

Don’t forget about friends from law school, and friends and associates within your firm. Go to lunch with lawyers who have had different experiences or followed different paths — learn what they do and in turn, they will learn what you do. Then help each other when you can.

Success doesn’t have to be the “traditional” journey through the ranks to the biggest client or the largest office. It can include school plays, karate and waiting at home for the plumber. As women — and nontraditional lawyers everywhere — speak up about what they want, the legal profession will become more accommodating.

Women can be successful in both their personal and professional lives and do so in a way that makes them and their families happy. It’s just a matter of finding the right personal definition of success and recognizing that sometimes a more flexible definition will result in real satisfaction.

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Powerful women permeate every facet of Morgan Lewis, from recruiting to mentoring and professional development to the firm’s management. We know that achieving greater diversity within the firm is essential to delivering exceptional service to our clients, and makes us a stronger firm.

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COUNSELORS AT LAW
Recognizing Women At the Top, On the Way Up

When The Legal Intelligencer and Pennsylvania Law Weekly decided to pick a list of women attorneys “on the verge,” the goal was to ask around and highlight those female lawyers who have risen to prominence or are on their way, and who are on the cusp of even greater accomplishments and increased visibility in the community. The truth is that there are a great many lawyers in Pennsylvania who do really good work, who have a positive impact on their firms and communities, and whose names you never see in print.

We saw this list as an opportunity to correct that. Obviously, there are a few big names that some might be expecting to see that have been left off this list. To some degree, it was intentional: We wanted to put the spotlight on some fine lawyers who may not be so well-known. Besides, odd as it may seem, we’ve already honored those big names before.

This list was based on nominations from the legal community, which were then vetted and narrowed down by the editors. We don’t pretend that this list is the only complete grouping of women lawyers “on the verge.” However, we would argue that it is an impressive list all the same, and all of the women on it deserve of attention and recognition.

ROBERTA BLOOM

Roberta Frankel Bloom is the first female partner of construction boutique Cohen Seglias Pallas Greenhall & Furman. She became partner in 2005 and now serves as the firm’s administrative and hiring partner. Bloom handles professional recruiting, loss prevention, computer and information systems, telecommunications and human resources issues at the firm. She developed and manages the firm’s summer associate program. All new associates go through Bloom’s “Introduction to Construction Law” seminar.

Sharon L. Caffrey is vice-chairwoman of the toxic tort and environmental law committee of the American Bar Association. She is a member of the Women in the Profession committee of the Philadelphia Bar Association, the executive committee for the Philadelphia Association of Defense Counsel and the Defense Research Institute.

LYNDA CALDERONE

Lynda L. Calderone joined Flaster Greenberg in 2005, and she heads the firm’s new intellectual property practice from its Philadelphia office. Calderone came to the firm from Akin Gump Strauss Hauer Feld. She was the firm’s first pure patent lawyer and handles patent prosecution as well as some litigation.

She said when she became the head of the intellectual property group that her goal was to broaden the practice in depth and numbers in order to take on a larger workload. She has begun that process by bringing on two intellectual property attorneys to join her so far.

Calderone’s practice is concentrated in the chemical, chemical engineering and mechanical arts, particularly in organic chemistry, engineering and applied science. She also counsels inventors and businesses in portfolio management and development of patent strategies, including conducting IP audits.

CAROLAN

Jacqueline M. Carolan is the chairwoman of Fox Rothschild’s pro bono committee, and she is also a partner in the firm’s professional liability and health care law groups. Her practice focuses on the malpractice defense of health care professionals and providers.

Because your legal needs don’t always wait for Monday morning.
I guess my primary concern is what I won’t be taken as seriously as other young lawyers — men and women — who don’t take time off to have children or don’t need to be at home at times. Business people perpetually make sacrifices of time so that they may be perceived as team players and hard workers. Attorneys and others are expected to carry cell phones and constantly check e-mail. The effect is that work is not a separate, categorized part of your life — it is your life. It seems difficult as a young lawyer to distinguish yourself in the practice of law, and maybe being the associate who bills the most hours is not the one you should choose. Developing an area of expertise may be another way to be seen as a serious contributor.

There are a number of ways to distinguish yourself in the practice of law, and maybe being the associate who bills the most hours is not the one you should choose. Developing an area of expertise may be another way to be seen as a serious contributor.
assumption to be avoided is that flexible work hours primarily benefit women. Part-time policies are becoming an equal opportunity reality. With the large number of couples who are working partners, male attorneys often need flexible schedules for child care too. Both men and women are also equally likely at some point in their careers to need flexible hours for non-child obligations such as elder care, care for a sick family member or for community activities. Flexibility is key to maintaining the loyalty of any talented, professional, and the issue of flexible work schedules and part-time policies should be guided by gender neutrality.

In this highly mobile professional environment, those firms that succeed in creating meaningful connections between their attorneys and the firm are likely to keep their attorneys long term. The ways that firms can forge connections specifically between women attorneys and the firm are limited only by the creativity and commitment of the firm. For example, investing time in guiding female attorneys to develop their independence, self-confidence and professional judgment in practicing law can be effective in attracting and retaining women attorneys. Meaningful connections can also be made when firms provide women with equal opportunities to work with clients and to take an active role in firm operations, including hiring, handling firm finances, and participating in decisions that affect the core business.

For their part, women attorneys can maximize their odds of landing a position with a firm that is likely to give them equal opportunities for plum assignments and for promotions if they do their homework about the firm even before their interviews. For example, a prospective applicant can research prior editions of Martindale-Hubbell to ascertain the names of women who are no longer employed by the firm. These women can be contacted and asked for their honest observations about the firm. The interview process becomes more productive when an applicant possesses such information.

Even after the attorney and the firm have selected one another, one or both parties may find that their expectations are not being met. Remaining in a situation that is not mutually satisfying and cannot be changed, negatively impacts both the attorney and the firm. The healthiest solution is to take control of the situation and find a better match. Lessons learned from a prior unsatisfactory experience can assist in a more productive discussion of expectations and objectives, and a better match the next time around.

So, can women get the plum opportunities in law firms and avoid getting the plum skins? Of course they can. It is a matter of women defining for themselves what those plum opportunities are and finding the firms who are interested and willing to provide them.

Eileen Riley Sutton
- 17 Years Experience as a Trial Attorney
- Practice Limited to Medical Negligence
- More than a decade of experience as a claims representative, and later as a defense attorney in hospital and physician malpractice cases

Carolyn M. Chopko
- Bachelor of Science, Nursing and Juris Doctor from Villanova.
- Clerk to the Honorable Bonnie Briggsme Leadbetter of the Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania.
- Commissioned as an Officer, with the rank of Lieutenant, United States Navy

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- Has Tried Cases Across Pennsylvania and New Jersey
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- Invited to be a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers
- Board of Governors of the Association of Trial Lawyers of America
- President, Pennsylvania Trial Lawyers Association
- First Female President, Philadelphia Trial Lawyers Association
- Musmano Award Recipient - Philadelphia Trial Lawyers Association Highest Award
- Rosenberg Award Recipient - Pennsylvania Trial Lawyers

Robert D. Pichini
- Consistent Record of Outstanding Results for Seriously-Injured Clients Over 25 Years
- First Woman in Pennsylvania Invited to Join International Academy of Trial Lawyers
- First Woman Officer, International Academy of Trial Lawyers
- American College of Trial Lawyers
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- Teacher of Trial Advocacy Skills to Lawyers and Law Students Nationwide
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Darling

continued from WIP5

distinguish between the fact that I was both a woman and a lawyer. That Kodak moment provided me with understanding and gave me guidance on how to handle my legal career as a woman. I needed to make being a woman an advantage, not a disadvantage.

For 20 years I have proudly practiced as a “lady lawyer.” I do not feel a need to dress in traditional suits to compete on a gender basis; I do not even own a navy blue suit or a brown briefcase. I take pride in being a professional woman who is lucky enough to be a lawyer.

Experiences similar to those of my Texas trial have been few and far between. There have been rare occasions when opposing counsel has used gender as a psychological tactic with comments about my "enticing" perfume confusing his thought process or comments about hairstyles. I believe comments of this type, always made out of the mouth of a court, are often intended to distract me from the work at hand. At times, I mentally chuckle when I sense that I am perceived early in a case as that stereotypical “blonde” who is the subject of the silly jokes. However, I must admit that I make no attempt to disabuse an adversary of such a thought; after all, it is their perception.

The best way to diffuse distracting tactics and the perceptions of others is to be successful. I have focused on putting my efforts into the real legal work of resolving cases to the satisfaction of clients. I knew that my approach was a good one for me when, in a case involving more than a million dollars, the jury entered a defense verdict against “Sam.” It is what it is... darling.
Litigation Mom

“Something has to give,” said another ML. “And that something is usually sleep.” While the pressure to be available to colleagues and clients never really goes away in a litigation practice, it is true that once an attorney has somewhat established herself and earned some credibility, she has at least some leeway to set limits, delegate to others and stick to a more flexible work schedule. Long-term planning, with realistic expectations as to what you’ll be able to do once you become a parent, can minimize the stress.

- Child care, child care, child care. Every ML I know confirmed that quality child care is essential to making it all work. “I get through busy day after busy day because I never have to spend even a moment worrying if my children are all right, safe and happy when I am not with them,” reported one.

And even then: “You need to have a backup. And a backup to your backup.” Even the most devoted nanny is going to get sick at some point, and even the best day care center will send your child home when he gets something contagious — and even then: “You need to have a backup. And a backup to your backup.”

- Talk about it. If there is one theme that emerged from my conversations with my colleagues, it is that working and mothering is an ongoing challenge. I have read with despair too many articles profiling successful career women with children that make it all sound like a breeze and give readers the impression that such a balance can be effortlessly achieved. The reality is, being a mother and being a successful professional with a high-energy career is a challenge.

But perhaps what reassures me most is that, having talked to others about how they do it, I know I am not alone — even though it can sometimes seem like an impossible mission. While finding mentors is important for any fledgling litigation associate, as one of my ML mentors said, “For those juggling litigation and motherhood, it takes on even greater importance.”

But perhaps what reassures me most is that, having talked to others about how they do it, I know I am not alone — even though it can sometimes seem like an impossible mission. While finding mentors is important for any fledgling litigation associate, as one of my ML mentors said, “For those juggling litigation and motherhood, it takes on even greater importance.”

The verdict is unanimous: Being a litigator and a mom at the same time is always going to be a work in progress, one where most of us won’t know for years whether we were truly successful at either enterprise. While law firms — like many companies in corporate America — have tried to help employees strike the right balance between work life and home life, too many obstacles still stand in the way to say that that effort has been a success. Our society has yet to solve the puzzle of how to support working mothers.

In the meantime, women who are mothers and litigators will continue trying to find ways to succeed in all aspects of their busy lives — and, here and there, trying to get a little sleep, too.

By using free moments to respond quickly to e-mails and voicemails, making sure colleagues know when it is OK to call you at home, and catching up on work after the kids are in bed, it is possible to buy yourself a little extra time.

That said, “You may need to work much harder, or be much smarter, than your male colleagues who have children,” one ML told me. That means being responsive and turning in a quality, timely product, regardless of where and when you do the work.

We agree! That’s why 50% of our attorneys and 31% of our shareholders are women, far exceeding national statistics.

We congratulate our shareholders Heather C. Giordana, Jodeen M. Hobbs, Maria L. H. Lewis and Tamara L. Traynor on their accomplishments.

Miller Alfano & Raspanti is a premier litigation boutique in Philadelphia where our female attorneys practice in areas such as Commercial Disputes, Employment Disputes, Special Master Services and White Collar Criminal Defense.


Seated (Shareholders): Jodeen M. Hobbs, Tamara L. Traynor, Heather C. Giordana, Maria L. H. Lewis

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have to address those. If somebody is, quote/unquote part-time, and they’re getting phone calls on Fridays, which is their day off and the client is insisting on immediate responses, … that sort of becomes not part-time anymore.

So … what we’ve done is create what we call client teams, where … the client understands … that they’re working with a team. And it works — it’s a win/win situation because it doesn’t just work for the part-time person, it works for … the other members of the team.

Davies: And then you get the best work product, too, because you have people who are all participating for the same goal and who can cover for each other. …

Feldman: … One of the things I’ve observed is that the younger lawyers that are coming up … think this problem’s all been fixed. … When it slaps them in the face, they don’t know what to do, and they think they’re the only person … that has this issue.

My partner and I have exchanged chairs on the Women’s Rights Committee for the Philadelphia Bar Association, and we can’t get a 25-year-old to show up at any of our meetings. It’s … very hard to convince somebody who is just out of law school, because they’re coming out where they probably have more women in their class than men. …

Wilson: … Not being in a firm, I can’t address some of the issues with regard to recruitment and retention in firms. … Having started in a practice when it was an anomaly for a woman to be a trial attorney, … it’s important that women can go into the court room and be respected … based on their skills as an attorney [and] their knowledge. … It’s important when people see women … committed to their families … and committed to … developing as a female attorney. … But certainly we want as many women in the courtroom as we can, because it is still something that you don’t often see.

Watson: I agree, and I think part of bridging the gap is through mentorship, because … you can convey to the up-and-coming lawyers that … not everything has changed. There are certain things still happening that effect our advancement in the profession. … By having that mentorship, you get to impart what you’ve learned along the way to those students. …

A statement was made earlier about doing things at the top … but I also feel that you have to start at the beginning as well. … One thing [I say to] the students in particular is, “All that I ask of you is that when you are in a position to make a difference, that you … reach back and help another.” … It fosters a better understanding.

Goodman: I think part of the problem is the pressures on all the lawyers … to bring in more clients. When I was younger … I think there was more of the senior lawyers handing off clients. … I think people are a little more possessive nowadays. … There’s this pressure to bring in business, and nobody really teaches you how to do that. … I think that economic pressure has hurt it a little bit. … I think some younger people … think, “I respect these women who have gone before me … but I’m going to do things a little differently.” Sometimes that’s heard by the more senior woman as, “They’re rejecting what I did, they don’t realize how much I did for them.” And so the conversation breaks down. … I don’t know how we get past that. …

Horn: …All of it rests on this backdrop of what is … the firm or corporate culture from which you practice. … As the culture evolves to be one of collaboration, it becomes less of a gender issue and more of, “How can we all be effective as a team of lawyers moving forward and advancing in the profession collectively?”

Fox: I couldn’t agree with that more. … I came from a large law firm, … and the way they dealt with clients there is if somebody had that client, they had them for life, no matter if they never worked with that.
client again. It was their client, they got attribution. We revolted against that when we started our firm, and really the whole culture is to institutionalize clients throughout the firm and to give credit for people who brought it in, people who work on it, people who expand it. ... It's much easier to fit anybody ... into the process when you have that kind of culture. ...

Wilson: ... What I see and hear is that not necessarily, “I've done this way and ... I want you to respect me,” but just an understanding of the struggle that's gone before. ... Education and communication ... does help the relationship both ways, because the elders have to realize the younger attorneys had a different type of struggle. ... An opportunity for people to come together and ... to appreciate will help the divide we’re talking about.

Maguschak: ... There are some senior women who are a little bit reluctant to [allow] part-time for the younger women because, [they think] “I came up the hard way, I didn't have any part time and I made it, and they can make it, too.” ... Hopefully that's a small percentage of more senior female attorneys. ...

Davies: ... As you make it ... you do have an obligation to help the younger women ... really to help all the younger lawyers. ... I think women lawyers within firms need to get together and talk about their issues. Oftentimes, you can feel very isolated and feel like it's just your problem and just your issue, but if you're sitting down and you have a ... group of women who can give you guidance, it's in some ways a little less threatening for the young women. ...
well. Before I practiced law, I taught school. Through the years, I’ve found that the communication skills necessary to be a good teacher translate directly into marketing efforts. Also, many of my mentors were fellow teachers with whom I’ve kept in touch through the years.

Kowalski: I was fortunate to have both male and female mentors but, as a new lawyer, I often found it necessary to discuss my experience with other women who were facing the same challenges as I was. At the time I began law school, I had two pre-school aged daughters. Although some people said that it would be impossible to raise two small children while working, attending law school, and then practicing law, I had friends and coworkers who were encouraging, and helped me to navigate that tough period. Most of those supporters were other women — some had taken the same path, and some were simply supporting my efforts by acting as friends and mentors. Interestingly, some of those women are now my clients, and I’ve been able to cross-sell work from those clients to others in the firm.

Danaher: Cross-selling offers a benefit that cold-calling doesn’t — the client is already on your doorstep. The issue, then, is how to get yourself in front of that client with the help of a fellow attorney. One effective way is to establish credibility with the other women in your firm. By being supportive of the firm’s female attorneys generally — including efforts to include family in a balanced life experience — you can increase opportunities that ultimately will benefit the entire firm.

Kowalski: I understand exactly what you mean. Recently, I walked down the hall to discuss a file with one of our female colleagues. She was pretty flustered, as she had just received a call from her kindergarten’s teacher who informed her that the child was using the reading mat as a wrestling mat. I could barely contain my laughter because, over the years, I’ve received the same calls from teachers informing me that my children had missed homework assignments, missed class or failed to take a test. It was — and continues to be — very stressful to juggle work, household chores, school events and homework sessions. However, it is refreshing and encouraging to discuss these issues with others in the same boat.

Danaher: There are a number of practical ways to maximize on these networks and mentoring relationships that we’ve created with other women in the firm. Creating a team approach among female attorneys to cross-marketing makes maximum use of the variety of talents and personalities of the group members. Informal meetings with female colleagues to discuss the types of cases being handled within the firm have helped us to recognize opportunities for cross-over work.

Kowalski: The speaker lunches that we’ve instituted recently have helped, too, since they’ve provided opportunities for our female attorneys to ask questions and discuss the difficulties of working in what remains a male-dominated field. Also, these get-togethers have allowed the associates to develop some confidence in their own abilities to cooperate with more senior women to market directly to existing clients.

Danaher: All right, let’s summarize: By taking the time to educate both clients and other firm attorneys about the talents and expertise of our other women lawyers — using presentations and regular meetings — we increase the opportunities for cross-marketing those skills. Working specifically with other women in the firm helps us to create resources that benefit our clients and help to establish working relationships within the firm to support cross-selling opportunities. The fact that our firm’s marketing committee includes a number of women has helped to raise issues in that committee that may have otherwise been overlooked.

Kowalski: Right, and the critical aspect of all of this is mentoring. To the extent that we establish credibility with other women attorneys in the firm, and work to form mentoring relationships and internal networks, everyone will benefit. The team approach can be structured to include women from various practice areas in order to introduce new attorneys to established clients. Of course, we’re not suggesting that men should be excluded from these efforts, but to the extent that we can base some part of our cross-marketing on the relationships that we have formed with other women attorneys, the whole firm benefits, as do our clients.

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Businesses

continued from WIP16

women-owned businesses grew by 23 percent (compared to 9 percent growth among all U.S. businesses), employment increased by 39 percent (compared to 12 percent nationally), and revenues rose by 46 percent (compared to 34 percent of all privately-held U.S. businesses).

As of 2004, there were 10.6 million businesses in which women owned at least 50 percent of the company. Those businesses employed 19.1 million workers and generated nearly $2.5 trillion in revenues. Nearly half (48 percent) of all privately-held U.S. companies were at least 50 percent owned by women.

Significantly, women-owned businesses are also becoming increasingly diverse. According to the National Women’s Business Council, “As strong as the growth of women-owned firms is overall, the growth of firms owned by women of color is even stronger. The number of minority women-owned firms increased by an estimated 55 percent between 1997 and 2004 — more than twice the rate of all women-owned firms (23 percent) and fully six times the rate of all U.S. firms (9 percent) during the period.”

Despite this impressive growth, most women-owned firms are very small, with fewer than 10 employees. They struggle to be taken seriously as business owners, employers and contributors to economic growth. And they continue to face challenges such as access to capital, training and technical assistance, and business networks.

Perhaps this is why — 10 years later — FASA’s 5 percent goal has never been achieved on a government-wide basis. Nevertheless, in fiscal year 2003, 3 percent of federal contract dollars were spent with women-owned businesses — the highest share achieved since this information has been recorded. Performance was even better for the number of contracts awarded: Nearly 600,000 contracts were awarded to women-owned small businesses in FY2003, which is more than double the 272,000 contracts awarded to women-owned small businesses in FY2002. Additionally, women-owned small businesses garnered 5.3 percent of contracts in 2003, up from 3.8 percent in 1999 and 3.4 percent in 2002.

TAKING ADVANTAGE

The government spends over $200 billion on goods and services per year. Although FASA set a goal for federal agencies to award at least 5 percent of all prime and subcontract dollars to women-owned small businesses, the most recent data shows that only 3 percent of federal contract dollars were spent with women-owned businesses. As a result, there are clearly untapped opportunities for women-owned businesses.

To take advantage of these opportunities, women-owned businesses must first determine which segment of the government they need to target. To do that, these businesses must do the following: assess their own strengths and what services and products they can provide; figure out which agencies and departments contract for those services and products; understand how those entities contract; and familiarize themselves with the entities’ operating administration.

Next, women-owned businesses have to register with the government as an available vendor. All businesses must register with Central Contractor Registration (www.ccr.gov); there are additional registration requirements for certain departments and agencies, including the Department of Defense. Previously, businesses had to submit representations and certifications for each individual large purchase contract award solicitation response. Now, they can enter their information online once for use on all federal contracts.

Once registered, the next step is monitoring opportunities to sell to the government. Individual agency Web sites list procurement opportunities. Or women-owned businesses can sign up for e-mail announcements through the Federal Business Opportunity Web site (www.fedbizopps.gov).

Once they are getting notice of opportunities, women-owned businesses need to focus on opportunities within their niche and prioritize. They need to make appointments and attend contracting sessions. Women also need to network, be persistent and follow-up on each activity.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Attorneys can help women-owned businesses take advantage of these opportunities. We can educate our clients about federal (and local) laws, such as FASA, that ensure women-owned businesses have opportunities that were historically denied to them. We can also help them navigate the regulatory minefield that often discourages women from pursuing public contracts.

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Before Carolan joined the legal profession, she was the head nurse of Hahnemann University’s critical care unit from 1979 to 1988. She continued to work there while attending law school, receiving her J.D. from Temple University School of Law in 1988.

LUcretia Clemons

Lucretia C. Clemons was well-prepared for her role in Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll’s corporate diversity practice. Prior to law school, she managed and operated a million-dollar hotel in New York City, where she was primarily responsible for the development and administration of the diversity management program, employee handbook, and performance appraisal system. She also has a master’s degree in diversity management in the employment and economic relations litigation. She also trains and advises employers on those topics.

Prior to joining the firm, Danaher was an in-house attorney at Alcoa where, in addition to her litigation responsibilities, she assisted in counseling and training of management, supervisory and line employees.

She has also acted as an assistant district attorney in Westmoreland County. She regularly volunteers as a pro bono attorney for the Neighborhood Legal Services Association and often acts as a faculty member for the National Institute of Trial Advocacy.

JENNIFER DIAMANTIS

Jennifer Diamantis was named the 2005 pro bono attorney of the year by the Center for Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights. When she isn’t doing pro bono work, Diamantis concentrates her practice in products liability and mass torts at Schnader Harrison Segal & Lewis.

She also handles personal injury and wrongful death actions, commercial disputes and intellectual property matters. Prior to joining the firm, Diamantis worked for the National Telecommunications and Information Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce, which serves as the president’s principal agency for research, advice and strategy recommendations on telecommunications and information policy issues. She also assisted with the preparation and instruction of a course on electronic commerce issues offered through the Villanova University School of Law graduate tax program.

ANN FIELD

Ann Thornton Field became the chairwoman of Cozen O’Connor’s national insurance litigation department earlier this year. She has been with the firm for 16 years and focuses her practice on aviation, products liability and commercial litigation.

She has been lead counsel for numerous matters in state and federal courts throughout the United States and has been involved with the defense of death claims arising from the bombing and crash of Pan Am Flight 103 in Lockerbie, Scotland, as well as the defense of claims arising from the 1996 Sideline accident and the 1996 TWA Flight 800 accident.

Field is vice-chairwoman of the American Bar Association (ABA) tort insurance practice section’s aviation and space law committee and a member of the ABA aviation litigation committee.

She is also co-founder of the firm’s Women’s Initiative, an effort committed to creating and implementing programs that foster the personal and professional development of women both within the firm and in neighboring communities.

LINDA ANN GALTANE

Linda Ann Galante is the company’s first partner chairwoman of Stradley Ronon Stevens & Young’s real estate and banking department and was a member of the firm’s board of directors from 1999 through 2002. She currently serves on the board of Drexel University Rainbow, which provides housing and support services for homeless women and their dependent children, and was its chairwoman for 12 years. In recognition of her work there, the Galante Career Development Center was named after her.

Since 1979, Galante has concentrated her practice in banking, real estate and nonprofit corporation law. She has represented community banks, handling all aspects of bank regulatory and finance work. In her real estate practice, she focuses on the investment, development, commercial, residential and low-income housing areas. In addition, she advises nonprofit institutions, particularly colleges and universities.

M. JANE GOODE

M. Jane Goode is a director in the business and commercial litigation section of New Jersey-based Gibbons Del Deo Dolan Griffinger & E c c h i o n e ’s Philadelphia office. She focuses her practice on areas of first-party, third-party and excess and surplus lines insurance coverage, insurance regulatory issues, reinsurance and appellate matters.

She is a member of the American Bar Association’s tort trial and insurance practice section and the insurance coverage litigation and public regulation of insurance law committees.

She has published and edited book chapters regarding insurance coverage litigation and bad-faith and punitive damages.

She served as law clerk to Judge Jerome B. Simandle in the U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey.

MARIE MILIE JONES

At the age of 35, Marie Milie Jones became managing attorney of Meyer D arragh Bebenek & Eck, making her the youngest attorney in history to head a major Pittsburgh firm.

She has since been twice re-elected and has held the position for seven and a half years.

Jones is a defense trial attorney, representing clients in employment matters and other commercial disputes. She also represents counties and local governments sued by plaintiffs alleging police brutality, excessive force and other violations of constitutional rights.

Jones is a past president of the Pennsylvania Defense Institute. She frequently speaks on topics such as prison risk management before groups like the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania.

Jones is a hearing committee member for the Pennsylvania Disciplinary Board and a member of the Pennsylvania Bar Association Commission on Women in the Profession.

M. L. H. LEWIS

Upon joining the firm in 2001, Maria L. H. Lewis became the first black female partner at Miller Alfano & Raspanti, and has since dedicated her time to the firm’s campaign for minority attorney success.

Under her watch, the firm was recently certified as a Minority Business Enterprise by the National Minority Supplier Development Council. Lewis focuses her practice on employment defense litigation. She successfully defended SEPTA recently in race discrimination cases filed by several former SEPTA employees.

Prior to joining the firm, Lewis worked at another large local firm and was served as an assistant district attorney at the Philadelphia District Attorney’s office.

As part of her community involvement, Lewis is an associate minister and serves on the legal staff of the Enon Tabernacle Baptist Church in Philadelphia.

She has integrated her faith with her legal knowledge through speaking engagements at the University of Pennsylvania Law School’s Christian Legal Society.
Verge continues on WIP30

SHARON MCKEE

Sharon McKee is a litigation shareholder at Hangley Aronchick Segal & Pudlin with a practice that covers class actions, civil rights, gaming law, sports law, financial services, personal injury and commercial disputes.

In the last few years, she brought a successful Title IX challenge, enjoining West Chester University from eliminating its gymnastics team. McKee is now representing basketball player Jennifer Harris in an action against Penn State and coach Rene Portland, which alleges that Portland dismissed Harris from the Lady Lions because she believed her to be gay.

McKee served as law clerk to Judge Richard L. Nygaard of the 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. Prior to entering law school, McKee worked for three years in New York doing welfare rights advocacy for the elderly and for seven years as a translator/interpreter of the Russian language for various media companies and publishers.

McKee served as the associate representative to the firm's executive committee in 2002.

JULIE MEDE

Julie W. Meder also had another career prior to the law. She is a former polymer research and development engineer for biotechnology technical sales representative with E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Co. Inc., located in Wilmington, Del.

Meder was formerly a research fellow at the Agricultural University of Wageningen in the Netherlands.

She now serves as the director and vice president of intellectual property boutique The Webb Law Firm, and she currently works on a customized schedule to manage both her professional and family life.

She is a registered patent attorney with experience in law, business and technical fields such as chemical engineering, physics and biotechnology. Meder is involved, among other areas, with patent protection for plant varieties.

DENISE MORZ

Denise J. Mroz came to Woodcock Washburn from the Recording Industry Association of America, where she served as vice president and anti-piracy counsel. She recently became a partner in 2006.

She uses her copy and trademark experience in her representation of candy manufacturers and vineyards, as well as software manufacturers and artists.

She routinely provides consulting services to the Philadelphia Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts.

On the transaction side of her practice, Mroz represents clients on business deals that include trademarked products and the creation of software licensing agreements, user guidelines and general assignments and licenses.

Mroz has been the chairwoman of the local chapters committee of the Copyright Society of the United States.

She has several published articles on copyright issues and has been a speaker on trademark and copyright matters.

VALERIE MUNSON

Valerie J. Munson is head of the religious and law practice group at Pittsburgh-based Eckert Seamans Cherin & Mellot's Philadelphia office.

She has more than 20 years of experience in advising and representing religious organizations and nonprofit organizations in employment, corporate governance, real estate, land use and sexual misconduct matters.

She also advises and represents for-profit and public-entity clients in preventing, resolving and litigating religious discrimination.

She has represented clients in international, civil and ecclesiastical tribunals.

In 2003 and 2004, Munson was a fellow at the Center of Theological Inquiry in Princeton, N.J. Munson is an elder in the Presbyterian Church.

She is also a trained religious conflict mediator and interfaith dialogue facilitator.

JOHANNA O'LOUGHLIN

Johanna O'Laughlin was promoted to senior vice president, general counsel and corporate secretary of Equitable Resources in 2002. She had joined the Pittsburgh-based company in 1996 after leaving Fisher Scientific Company, where she was also senior vice president and general counsel.

Prior to going to law school, O'Laughlin spent two years as a securities analyst for Wall Street investment advisory firm Argus Research. She began her legal career at Reed Smith, where she specialized in commercial litigation.

Currently she is a council member of the American Bar Association public utility, communications and transportation section and a member of the American Gas Association legal committee.

She has previously chaired the Pennsylvania Business Roundtable legal affairs subcommittee.

In addition to her legal positions at Equitable Resources, O'Laughlin handles the company's government affairs and communications.

ALKA PATEL

Alka A. Patel is an associate with Pepper Hamilton's Pittsburgh office, where she practices intellectual property law as a registered patent attorney. Her technology practice includes materials science, chemical, medical, mechanical and business method fields.

From 1996 to 1999, Patel worked as a process engineer at Timken Latrobe Steel Company. She then worked as a sales engineer assistant with GE Industrial Systems from 1999 to 2001. After graduating from Duquesne University School of Law, Patel spent more than two years at The Webb Law Firm.

Patel is a past president of the Pittsburgh chapter of the Society of Women Engineers and serves on a number of nonprofit boards, including the YWCA of Greater Pittsburgh and the Girls Scouts Trillium Council.

Patel is a graduate of the CORO Center of Civic Leadership's Women in Leadership Program.

SUSAN SMITH

Susan J. Smith is Fox Rothschild's first female office managing partner and works out of the firm's Bucks County office. She is a member of the firm's executive committee and the head of its family law practice.

Smith's practice focuses on divorce and child custody matters.

A member of the Pennsylvania Bar Association, Smith was selected for the 1997-1999 term as the youngest member of the governing council for the family law section.

Smith currently serves on the board of directors of Planned Parenthood of Bucks County and previously served on the board of Friends of Peace Valley Nature Center.

She has been asked by state Sen. Joe Conti to serve on his finance committee.

Smith is a former adjunct professor at Gwynedd-Mercy College, where she taught courses on marriage and family and the psychology of women.

BONNIE STEIN

Bonnie S. Stein is co-chairwoman of the litigation department at Bucks County-based Curtin & Heefner. She is the section head of the firm's property damage and bad faith practice.

Stein mentors young lawyers in the firm and oversees administrative needs.

She was the chairwoman of the Pennsylvania Bar Association's report card committee for six years.

Stein was a member of Temple University School of Law's first LLM in trial advocacy class and now teaches a class in the program. She also coaches the Villa Joseph Marie High School team in the Pennsylvania Young Lawyers High School Mock Trial competition.

Stein graduated from law school at the age of 30 with three children at home. She said that the law helped give her direction after the death of her husband and son in 1991. She has focused on the role of women in the legal profession since that time and is a member of the PBA commission on women in the profession.

ALISON STRONG

Since joining Cozen O'Connor as an associate in 2004, Alison Strong has launched a networking group for junior women in commercial real estate law. She is one of two attorneys to practice real estate transactional work at the firm.

Strong has been involved in closing a $100 million-plus portfolio deal with a regional hotel chain and acquiring a million-square-foot industrial plant in New York with an investment of $300 to $400 million in the project.

In addition, Strong is heavily involved in the firm's nationwide Women's Initiative, responsible for the budget and 12-month agendas for all 24 offices.

Last year, she contributed more than 60 hours of real estate-related pro bono work, handling acquisitions of property and lease negotiations for the YMCA and the disposition of the headquarters for Dignity Housing.

SHERRY SWIRSKY

Sherry A. Swirsky is the chairwoman of Schnader Harrison Segal & Lewis' antitrust and trade regulation practice and has more than 25 years of experience in trial and appellate litigation.

She concentrates her practice in matters involving antitrust, class actions, corporate governance, directors' and officers' liability, election and campaign finance law, health care, insurance, nonprofit corporations and securities. She also conducts corporate internal investigations and provides governmental affairs counseling.

In addition to her professional duties,
For many, the bringing together of different elements into one perfect composition is the essence of good design. At Littler Mendelson, such an approach is an integral part of our practice. It takes diverse talents, ideas and perspectives to solve the problems posed by today’s varied and multicultural workplaces. To learn more about Littler Mendelson, our practice, and our commitment to diversity, please visit us online at www.littler.com.

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Kristine Derewicz, Shareholder • Barbara Rigo, Shareholder • Marguerite Walsh, Shareholder
Christina Hanna, Associate • Michele Malloy, Associate • Sarah Powenski, Associate • Shari Schneider, Associate
Roundtable
continued from WIP27

so that they know what they’re headed for early on. …

Watson: … I think mentorship ... is important, of female attorneys in particular … [and] education of associates and partners about the importance of inclusiveness, …

Goodman: I think part of it is just investing. When you see a very bright young attorney coming in, [you say], “How am I going to keep this person here in 10 years,” … trying to encourage them to do other things, whether it’s bar association or being out there in different groups. … Encourage young associates like you would anybody else, so that they have a reason to want to be there.

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SHIRA GOODMAN AND JENNIFER HORN

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27

Swirsky serves on the board of directors for the Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation, having been appointed by Mayor John Street in 2005, and is also a member of the Board of Trustees for the Free Library, a position she was appointed to in 2004.

She was Pennsylvania co-chairwoman of Women for Clinton/Gore ’96. Swirsky authored the national election law manuals for the Democratic presidential campaigns in 1988, 1992, 1996 and 2000.

JAIME TUITE

Jaime S. Tuite is an associate in the Pittsburgh office of Buchanan Ingersoll and

practices in the firm’s labor and employment law group.

Tuite concentrates her practice in a variety of issues arising out of the employer-employee relationship, including employment policies, employment contracts, unemployment compensation matters and discrimination litigation.

She counsels employers on the hiring, discipline and firing of employees, and she also provides sensitivity and management training.


In 2001, she started an initiative mentoring high school students and continues to volunteer as a mentor at Peabody High School.

Tuite serves on the volunteer boards for Pittsburgh Habitat for Humanity and Neighborhood Legal Services Association.

KAREN JACKSON VAUGHN

Karen Jackson Vaughn is the leader of diversity initiatives at Saul Ewing, where she was hired specifically to develop its diversity program. According to the firm, she is one of 32 in the country with her position.

Prior to joining the firm, Vaughn was assistant dean for career planning at Temple University’s Beasley School of Law.

For a decade, Vaughn worked at the Community Legal Services in Philadelphia, where she rose to the position of managing attorney.

In that capacity, Vaughn engaged in a variety of activities, primarily through the minorities in the profession committee of the Philadelphia Bar Association, designed to address diversity issues within Philadelphia law firms and corporate legal departments. At one point, she served as co-chairwoman of the committee.

... Samaras: I think it’s fairness and commitment. Be fair to women. ... Why would you waste your time or their time? ... If you don’t see the value that a female attorney — and the emphasis is on “attorney” — brings to your firm, your practice and your clients, ... it really shouldn’t be affecting your life and the resources of your firm.

Fox: ... This is the most difficult one, the one we struggle with the most, is really to value the professional development of all attorneys in the firm ... valuing human capital as well.

TLL: Thank you.

To listen to the full roundtable discussion, visit thelegalintelligencer.com and click on the links to the Women in the Profession podcast. Once you see the links for the different audio files, you can either click on the file and listen,
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They all look
THE SAME TO ME.

Apprentice to
Galileo Galilei, 1636

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