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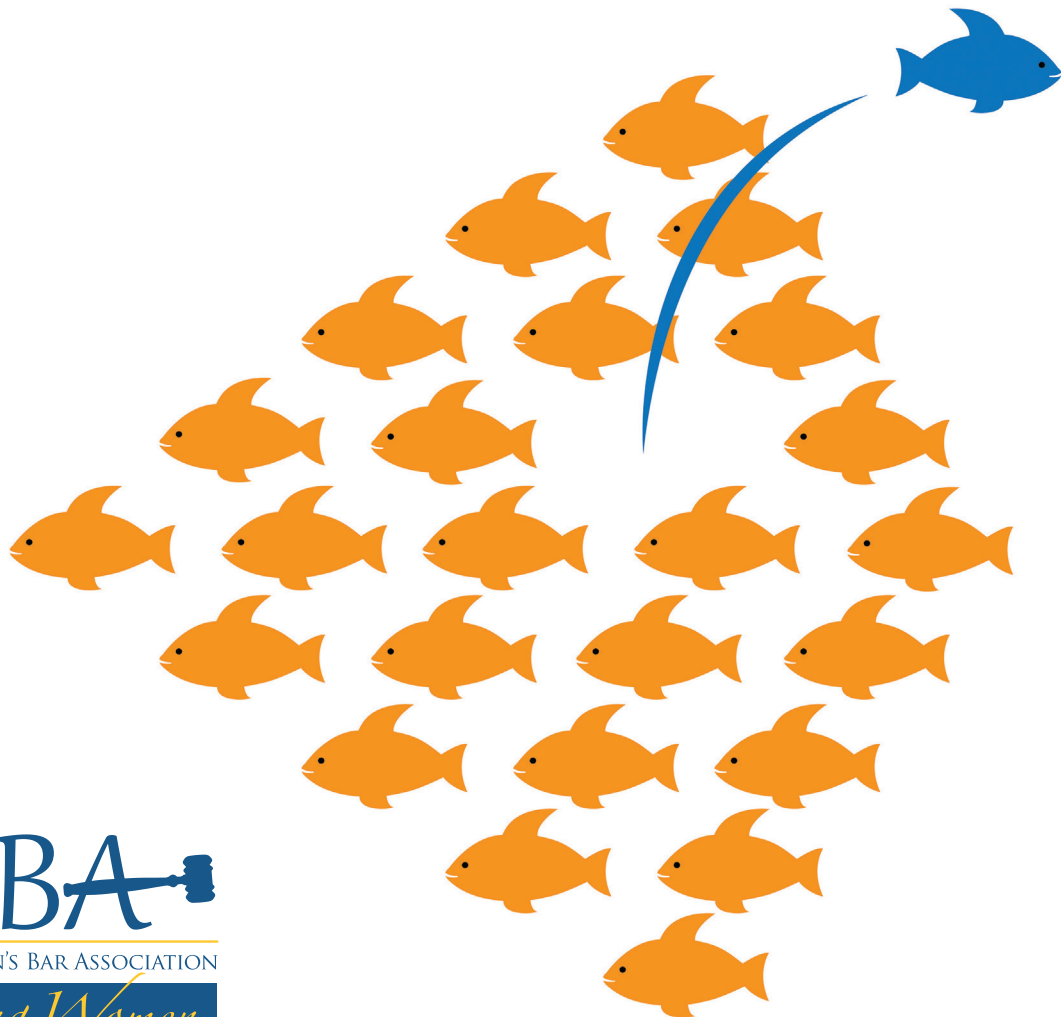
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the **Advocate**



A Publication of the Colorado Women's Bar Association

Individuality: Creating Your Own Path



CWBA 

COLORADO WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION

Advancing Women
AS LEADERS IN THE LAW



President's Letter || Alison E. Zinn

Finding Your Own Balance.

Examining Your Individuality.

"Do not confuse symmetry with balance. Find the path that works for you."

It seems the word balance has been exhausted or, more likely, we've forgotten what it really means. There are so many articles, conversations, and advice surrounding the need to find "balance." As if the word "balance" implies the same set of needs and desires for us all.

At the CWBA's 37th Annual Convention last spring, attendees enjoyed a funny, inspiring, thought provoking, and charismatic presentation by then Gov. John Hickenlooper's Chief of Staff Roxane White. When I reflect back to this presentation, I am more drawn to the conversations she and I shared in preparation for it.

Specifically, I recall Roxane's dislike of the word "balance" and how we overuse this term to the point where we've all forgotten that "balance" can take different forms other than the *symmetrical* balance of ensuring that work and life outside work are evenly matched. Roxane reminded me that most of our wants and needs in life will be successfully achieved through *asymmetrical* balance: the different elements of our lives might not always carry the same weight at the same time. The trick is giving each element of your life the weight *you* want it to have at various times.

My point is, take the first part of this New Year to revisit/refocus/redefine your version of "balance." Look at who

you are, what you want, and where you are headed. Be prepared: fully examining your individuality takes courage, quiet thought, and honesty; however, the rewards of taking some time for this examination are many!

When it comes to your career, the examination can be complicated. Maybe it is time to apply for the bench, change firms, or simply refocus yourself on the path you are currently traveling. Maybe it is time for a mentor who might enlighten you about the strengths you've forgotten or the opportunities in our community that await you. At a minimum, be mindful and rededicate yourself to your goals and dreams while identifying a few new ones too.

The CWBA Board is hard at work and has tremendous plans for 2015. We hope to reignite your dedication to our exceptional legal community with quality and in-the-moment programming; support your desires to advance to or in leadership roles at the office and outside the office; and focus on *you* with our annual Mom's Luncheon, social/networking events, and self-promotion programming. Whatever version of balance you bring to the table, we welcome you and have something for you.

Happy New Year.

Alison E. Zinn is 2014-2015 President of CWBA and is an Attorney at Wade Ash Woods Hill & Farley, PC where she focuses on litigation involving wills, trusts, and probate fiduciaries.

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|| Perspectives ||

Jennifer Casey || Alyssa Reed



Unaccompanied Minors Facing Deportation in the Denver Immigration Court

Alyssa Reed, Reed Immigration, LLC: *Alyssa decided to go into immigration law in order to help people. She spoke Spanish, saw people who needed help, and it was a natural fit for her. Recently, Alyssa decided to have a baby, open her own firm, and became the chair-elect of the American Immigration Lawyers Association.*

Jennifer Casey, Senior Associate Attorney at Kolko and Associates, PC:

Jennifer grew up in Denver and was an elementary school teacher after college, where she worked closely with families who had recently immigrated to the U.S. During law school, Jennifer externed for the U.S. Immigration Court in San Francisco and has stayed in immigration law ever since.

What should CWBA members know about the legal issues facing women, children, and unaccompanied minors from Central America who are facing deportation proceedings in Denver Immigration Court?

Alyssa: The number one thing CWBA members should know is that in immigration proceedings, immigrants facing potential deportation have no right to government-funded counsel, no matter how young, or whether they have a parent to assist them. I have witnessed cases where an immigration judge questioned a five-year-old child facing deportation with no parent or attorney to support or assist that child.

Second, a misperception exists that these women and children are coming to the U.S. for purely economic reasons, to escape poverty. These women and children are fleeing for their lives. If they remain in Central America, they will be conscripted into gangs or worse, so the only way for families to save

We asked two people:

Tell us about your experience with immigration issues in Denver Court.

their children is to send them on this treacherous journey. These children and their families have lived through serious and horrific circumstances in their home countries. One woman told me a story about bringing her child to school and finding three bodies hanging from the entrance as a warning to those who don't comply with the gang's orders.

Jennifer: There are two groups of people we need to be concerned about. One is the unaccompanied children who are currently in expedited deportation proceedings in Denver Immigration Court. A conservative estimate is that about half of these children are eligible for some type of relief from deportation, but they cannot advocate for themselves.

The second group is the mothers and children who are detained in "family detention centers." In October, I spent a week providing volunteer legal services through the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) at the detention center in Artesia, New Mexico. Thankfully, this facility closed in mid-December, but the families detained there are being relocated to another facility in Texas. These families are heard by Denver Immigration Court Judges through video conference. They seek release on bond but the government is arguing they are a threat to national security. Those who are denied bond will

be forced to try their cases for asylum through a video screen to the immigration judges in Denver. Many will be forced to recount serious trauma—rape, violence, threats against their lives—with their children on their laps or

sleeping in their arms.

We have obligations under both international and domestic law to provide due process to those seeking asylum in the U.S. Establishing eligibility for asylum

“These women and children are fleeing for their lives.”

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JD Advantage:

Forging A Unique Path

By Jyoti Pandya

Finding a career that feels authentic to our unique selves can be both thrilling and gratifying. CWBA members Alli Gerkman, Debbie O'Neil and Nicole Mundt attended school with plans to practice law but eventually transitioned to non-traditional positions. We've all heard the refrain, "You can do anything with a law degree." While that isn't always true, let's hear from three women who have chosen the road not taken.



Jyoti Pandya,
founding partner of
Pandya Law, LLC

Alli Gerkman is the Director of Educating Tomorrow's Lawyers for IAALS, the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System. IAALS is a national research center committed to continuous improvement of the American Legal System. Educating Tomorrow's Lawyers is a national initiative with a consortium of law schools around the country to align legal education with the needs of an evolving profession.

Deborah (Debbie) O'Neil is the Vice President for Assured Equity Management Corporation. Assured Equity works with privately owned companies to develop a business succession strategy that creates a benefits program for the owners and employees (health, disability income insurance, as well as retirement plans and non-qualified benefits). Debbie helps owners coordinate their personal planning with their business planning to enable success in both areas.

Nicole Mundt is a Transformation Consultant who owns Cadence Consulting. She is currently on a two-year contract with DigitalGlobe, a satellite technology company. She works with DigitalGlobe's Business Transformation team

on improvement projects throughout the organization. Her role consists of cross-functional process, efficiency and problem-solving projects.

How did you begin your career?

Alli: I practiced law for about three years. There were things I loved about practicing law, and I care about the legal system, but I also had a sense that I wanted to play a different role. I work with practicing lawyers on projects every day and I love to learn about what they do, but I have never regretted leaving the actual practice of law.

Debbie: I started law school after being in the military for eight years. It was the LA Law days and I wanted to be a litigator. I interned with a litigation firm for one summer but I found that they did not have the flexibility that I wanted in my life, which was very important after leaving the military.

Nicole: I practiced law for two years. I left law because I quickly realized that I was on the wrong side of the table. I worked in corporate law, and I spent a majority of my time advising clients on how to take the least amount of risk and explaining the multitude of ways their business arrangements or ideas could go awry. What comes naturally to me, however, is creative problem solving and figuring out how to execute on seemingly far-fetched ideas.

How did you make the transition?

Alli: I'd like to say that it's easy to transition from law to an alternative path—and maybe for some it is—but that wasn't my experience. It was a lot of work, a painful pay cut (initially, at least), countless awkward questions from well-meaning friends and family, and luck, lots of luck.

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Ryann Fogel || Tiffany Updegraff



“Up Where We Belong”

CWBA Convention Committee

Announcing the CWBA’s 38th Annual Convention: May 15-17, 2015

Plan now to join us for our [Annual Convention](#), “Up Where We Belong,” to be held at Vail’s hottest boutique hotel, The Sebastian – Vail, from May 15-17, 2015. *Travel + Leisure* and *Condé Nast Traveler* have recognized The Sebastian as one of the top hotels in the world. Relax for a weekend in the heart of Vail Village while enjoying great CLEs and incredible amenities, reenergizing your practice, and interacting with colleagues and community leaders. There is something for everyone!

We encourage you to bring your family, too! There is plenty to do in Vail for significant others and children. Also, back by popular demand, the CWBA will be offering many on-site activities for kids, including a movie night. [The Sebastian](#) also has dog-friendly rooms, so bring your four-legged family members! We have negotiated great room rates at only \$145 per night (minimum two-night stay). Look for brochures to arrive and registration to open in February.

Keynote Speaker Announcement

We are excited to welcome Lt. Gen. Michelle D. Johnson, Superintendent, U.S. Air Force Academy, as one of our outstanding presenters. A distinguished graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1981, Lt. Gen. Johnson completed graduate studies as a Rhodes Scholar before earning her wings in 1984. She is the first woman to lead a U.S. Department of Defense Service Academy. Some highlights from her outstanding



and decorated career include serving as Deputy Director for Information and Cyberspace Policy on the Joint Staff, and as the Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations and Intelligence to NATO.

We are also thrilled to announce legal writing guru Bryan Garner will present

one of his renowned writing workshops. As an added bonus, all attendees will receive one of his books! Other presentation topics attendees can look forward to include: ethics and malpractice; mentoring; marijuana laws and legislation; same sex marriage; self-promotion; trial practice; practice in specialty courts; and privacy and data security. We also look forward to honoring this year’s Mary Lathrop Award winner, former CWBA President and retired Colorado Court of Appeals Judge Sandra Rothenberg. You won’t want to miss it!

Ryann Fogel is a CWBA Board Member and an associate at McConnell Fleischner Houghtaling, LLC, where her practice includes representation of professionals involved in both medical and legal malpractice actions.

Tiffany Updegraff is a CWBA Board Member and an associate at Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, LLP, where she practices labor and employment law.

**Save The Dates
May 15-17, 2015
38th Annual Convention**

Someone's Gotta Say It

Like A Lawyer

By Nicole Mundt



Nicole Mundt,
owner of Cadence
Consulting

You know you've done it before, and chances are, you even did it this week. Without even thinking about it, you used legalese to communicate with a non-lawyer. It turns out being trained to "think like a lawyer," also includes the engrained training on how to talk like a lawyer. And nothing makes lawyer-ness more obvious than listening to lawyers conversing with laymen.

To the extent you don't know what I'm talking about, pay close attention the next time you learn the drycleaner lost your suits, the waiter brings you the wrong tab, or you're ordering your over-complicated latte at Starbucks. With certainty, you throw in a lawyerism or two.

Can you even utter an "including" that isn't followed by "without limitation?" And if you answered "yes" to that question, is it because you prefer "but not limited to" after your "includings?" If so, then you might be a lawyer. Such language is simply not used in everyday conversation.

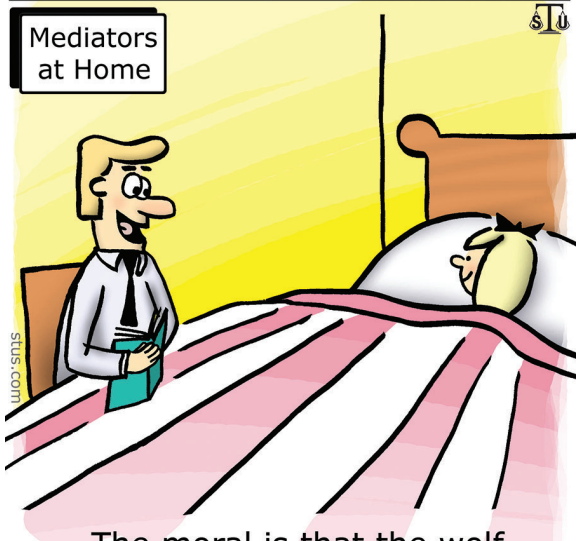
Perhaps you ask you spouse to "briefly describe" his day, and when he quietly inquires about yours, you tell him you would like him to repeat the question. You may, or may not, have denied your child something he/she wanted simply because it's a slippery slope. You likely considered any argument to the contrary null and void.

At this time, you may still be skeptical, so let me direct your attention to your vernacular during arguments with non-lawyers. You get extra points if no one has ever rolled their eyes and said something to the effect of "you're such a lawyer"

during a dispute, controversy or claim. If that is the case, however, I would contend you're in the minority and presume you may be lying. You get negative points if you've ever shouted, "fruit of the poisonous tree!" during an especially heated argument.

Stu's Views

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The moral is that the wolf and the three little pigs had no zone of agreement.

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The foregoing notwithstanding, there are some attorneys who can keep lawyer-talk at work. To the extent you know any, keep me advised.

"Someone's Gotta Say It" is a regular fun feature of the The Advocate, committed to bringing you true, relevant and/or hilarious information.

Nicole Mundt loves writing and is a member of the CWBA Publications Committee. She is a Business Transformation Consultant focused on helping companies grow efficiently and effectively.



Inside The CWBA: Meet Catherine Shea

Board Member Spotlight



Catherine (Cat) Shea is the type of woman you call when you want to get something done. She's been on the CWBA board for nearly five years, generously spending her time and making a difference on several committees. She

took a few moments out of her busy schedule as both a trial attorney at the Office of Attorney Regulation Counsel (OARC) and as co-chair of the CWBA Judicial Committee to answer some questions for *The Advocate*.

What's your favorite part of being an attorney?

I learn something new every day. Like every job, there are some routine things, but in general, I'm never handling the same issues from one day to the next. It keeps me engaged. In my current position, I also know I'm making a difference, both to the profession and to the public. I don't think everyone can say that about their 9 to 5 job.

How did you become involved with OARC? Besides having—like most 6 year olds—a dream of dressing up in fancy suits and regulating attorneys one day?

Cat laughs because her interviewer pronounces the acronym for Office of Attorney Regulation

Counsel like the "Orc"—the villains from the "Lord of the Rings" series. I actually spent a couple of years grading bar exams and met a lot of people in the office that way. Openings are pretty rare, and I knew I wanted to stay at the Attorney General's office for close to five years. I was four and a half years in when an opening came up, and I applied right away. They like to keep a good balance of public and private sector experience, and I happened to be a good fit!

Does OARC have the Jerry Springer-esque scenarios we all envision?

Like most attorney positions, you get both the crazy and mundane. There's no chair-throwing in our office, but there are definitely moments where you think to yourself, "You can't make this stuff up!"

"I learn something new everyday. I'm making a difference, both to the profession and to the public."

What, in your opinion, is the major difference between men and women when it comes to practicing law?

When I think about my relationships with both male and female colleagues, I can't identify anything truly fundamental. Women attorneys have to deal with many issues that male attorneys don't—lack of pay equity, fewer role models/mentors in power positions, motherhood—but, at base, both male and female attorneys work hard to achieve results for their clients. I don't think there's anything gender-specific about that.

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What do you do when you're not "regulating" attorneys?

I love to travel, especially to places where they make wine. I started running recently, and last year I did my first 10k which was really rewarding. I love reading, too. I was an English major so I think it's kind of ingrained in me. Right now I'm reading Amy Poehler's new book "Yes Please." Hilarious!

Where do you call home?

Definitely Denver. I'm originally from Louisiana, and my whole family is scattered across the South. But I knew Denver was home when I couldn't wait to get back here after exploring somewhere new. For the longest time, coming home from my travels was a bit of a letdown, but now I am equally excited to return home as I am to travel.

What's your spirit animal?

Ha! A wolverine. Go Michigan!

Catherine (Cat) Shea is a CWBA Board Member and an Assistant Regulation Counsel with the Colorado Supreme Court.

Jacqui Hill is a CWBA Board Member and an associate attorney at Podoll and Podoll, P.C. She works with both the Transactional and Litigation teams and owns the firm record for most time spent on LexisNexis in one day.



Register Now!

Many upcoming CLEs and events are planned in the coming months.

Go to the CWBA Calendar at cwba.org for more information.

The Advocate is going all-digital in April with the Spring 2014-2015 issue!

Watch for an email with information to gain online access to the members-only Advocate on the website.

Women & Children

Detained In Immigration Limbo

By Christina Fiflis

Christina Fiflis shares her experience of visiting the family immigration detention camp for mothers and children fleeing narco-trafficking recruitment and other dangers in Central America located in Artesia, New Mexico in July 2014 with her colleague Shelley Wittevrongel. The camp closed in December, and the families were moved to a new detention facility in Texas.

The Artesia family camp was located no less than a three-and-a-half-hour drive from the nearest lawyers who might have been able to represent the more than 600 refugees detained there. This prompted a group of Colorado lawyers to organize pro bono representation of these refugee families, until the American Immigration Lawyers' Association could finalize development of its pro bono effort there.



The night I arrived, two human-rights lawyers, who were part of a delegation which had flown in for the day to tour the facility, passed us two pink post-it notes with a handful of names and detainee-tracking numbers of women who had furtively begged them for help during the tour. The next morning, we went to meet with those on the list. Over the next 48 hours, the word spread that lawyers had arrived; our list grew to over 50, with new names appearing on slips of paper collected and retrieved from the bras of those with whom we met.

With the contingent of lawyers who followed, we became the Artesia first responders. We were stunned by the realization that what was happening to the detainees in Artesia was nothing less than a wholesale betrayal: betrayal of the women and children seeking fulfillment of America's unique promise of refuge; betrayal of the attorneys who sought to ensure access to justice; betrayal even of those in government who were unwillingly implicated in the gross denial of due process; and, fundamentally, betrayal of our entire legal system.



Christina Fiflis, owner and manager of Fiflis Law, LLC

The lawyers who worked in Artesia early on experienced what I called "the Artesia effect": stunned disbelief that the denial of due process we were bearing witness to what was actually happening in America. After six months of dedicated pro bono representation, the Artesia effect shifted; the mayor of Artesia commented recently about the "drastic" change of many fewer deportations and increased releases, attributing it to a new set of judges and "the arrival of outside lawyers." The current Artesia effect appears to be stunned disbelief by some that defending against denial of due process and attempting to ensure access to justice, in spite of overwhelming obstacles, can and will continue to happen in America.

Christina Fiflis is the owner and manager of Fiflis Law, LLC, an Immigration Law firm. The firm assists clients in all immigration matters, including family-based, employment-based immigration defense and naturalization. She also chairs the ABA Commission on Immigration.



Alli Gerkman || Monica Rosenbluth



2015 Mary Lathrop Award Winner

CWBA Professional Advancement Committee

There are many reasons the highest honor the CWBA gives each year is named after Mary Florence Lathrop. She excelled at everything she attempted and accomplished a series of “firsts”— she was the first woman to open a law office in Colorado, the first woman to argue before the Colorado Supreme Court, the first woman to be admitted to the U.S. Supreme Court, and the first woman to join the Colorado and Denver Bar Associations.

Our honoree this year shares all of these strengths, but perhaps she is most like Lathrop in her unrelenting drive to do what she believed was right in the face of powerful foes. A male lawyer once referred to Lathrop in exasperation as “that damn[ed] woman.” And this year, we honor another “damned woman” – a damned inspiring one.

We are delighted to introduce to you the 2015 CWBA [Mary Lathrop award](#)-winner, **Judge Sandra Rothenberg**. Rothenberg received her undergraduate degree in English from the University of Miami in 1965, and she decided to attend the University of Miami law school after meeting a female law student that she respected and admired. Rothenberg obtained her juris doctor from the University of Miami in 1968. She also obtained an LL.M. from Georgetown University Law Center, where she was the first female Prettyman Fellow, a prestigious two-year fellowship focused on representing adults and adolescents accused of crimes.

After school, Rothenberg applied to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), which was then under the leadership of J. Edgar Hoover.

Her application was rejected and, over the course of several exchanges with Hoover, the FBI rejected her application again and again. Hoover claimed the job was too dangerous for her. Rothenberg responded by suing the FBI as the lead plaintiff in a lawsuit alleging sexual discrimination on behalf of hundreds of women, prompting this headline from *The New York Times*: “To Her ‘It’s the FBI or Nothing’ and So Far It’s Been Nothing.” The case was the first time a woman had ever sued a law enforcement agency



for sexual discrimination in hiring, and it paved the way for women nationally to get employment with police and fire departments across the country. The case settled in 1972, and the FBI began hiring women. When interviewed about the outcome of the case on national media, Rothenberg said, “I’m glad the FBI will now follow the law.”

After the case, Rothenberg headed west and relocated to Colorado.

After associating with a firm for a few months, she opened a storefront office on South Pearl Street as a poverty lawyer. Among her many clients was Janet Bonnema, a female engineer denied the right to work on the construction of the Eisenhower Memorial Tunnel because it was considered “bad luck” to have women in tunnels, which was at the time an arcane but perpetual wives’ tale. In a 1972 article on the case, *Life* magazine called Rothenberg “one of a new breed of lawyers handling sex-discrimination cases.”

Rothenberg’s legacy is memorialized in ink in many of the nation’s top news publications, but it is also etched in the hearts and minds of those who worked with her and knew her personally.

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Shelly Dill Combs || Angie Schmitz



A Smashing Success: Legislative Breakfast

CWBA Public Policy Committee

We had a successful annual Legislative Breakfast on December 11, 2014 at Davis Graham & Stubbs LLP with more than 100 people attending. We especially thank our hosts Davis Graham & Stubbs LLP, as well as our sponsors, for joining with the CWBA to support legislation that advances the interests of Colorado women and children.

Table sponsors included: Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck LLP, Butler Snow, Colorado Bar Association, Shelly Dill Combs, The Drake Law Firm PC, Elkind Alterman Harston PC, Josie Faix, Fennemore Craig, Gibson Dunn, Heizer Paul LLP, The Law Office of Patricia Jarzowski PC, Lowry Parady LLC, Ellis Kelly LLC, Nancy Rodgers, Seter & Vander Wall PC, Shannon Stevenson, Truhlar & Truhlar LLP and Alison Zinn. Thank you again for your support!



We also thank our keynote speaker Representative Beth McCann for her willingness to speak and share her personal stories about the CWBA. We appreciate Governor Hickenlooper's Office and are thankful that both Tracee Bentley and Stephanie Donner attended. Bentley provided encouraging remarks about the Governor's interest in legislation affecting women and children. We are also proud that Senator John Cooke, Senator Larry Crowder, Senator John Kefalas, and Senator Pat Steadman attended and spoke about their plans in the upcoming session. In addition, we

appreciate Representative Jeni Arndt, Representative Tracy Kraft-Tharp, Representative Su Ryder, Representative Angela Williams, and Representative Faith Winter attending and sharing their legislative goals for the upcoming session. We hope to work as partners with these legislators and others as we move into the 2015 session.

The CWBA Public Policy Committee actively engaged in seven bills in the 2014 session. The Committee applied a thoughtful approach when considering legislation. Most important were the potential impact the legislation would have on the organization's mission and the impact that CWBA would have as an advocate. We are proud to report that six bills passed (and one bill which we opposed was defeated) and were signed by the Governor. In 2015, our areas of focus include pay equity, family medical leave, child care costs, human trafficking, and juvenile defense. We believe these are areas where the CWBA has a unique voice and where our members want their voices to be heard.



Shelly Dill Combs is a CWBA Board Member and a staff attorney at JAG, the Judicial Arbitrator Group, Inc., where she works on complex civil cases that are being arbitrated or mediated prior to trial. She is also an adjunct professor at the Community College of Denver where she teaches legal research and writing.

Angie Schmitz is a CWBA Board Member and an associate attorney with The Drake Law Firm, P.C., representing businesses and individuals in creditors' rights, insurance, and general business disputes.

Watch the website during the legislative session for details about our priorities and calls to action.



Ann Lebeck || Catherine Shea



2015 Judicial Reception Honoree

CWBA Judicial Committee

Since 1987, the Colorado Women’s Bar Association (CWBA) has held an Annual Judicial Reception to recognize the contributions of Colorado’s judiciary members and to honor a specific judicial official for his or her meaningful work. Past Judicial Reception honorees include Colorado Supreme Court Chief Justice Mary J. Mullarkey (1987); 10th Circuit Court of Appeals Chief Judge Stephanie K. Seymour (1994); Denver Juvenile Court Judge Orrelle Rodgers Weeks (2007); and Colorado Court of Appeals Judges Diana Terry (2013) and Karen Ashby (2014).

This year, the CWBA’s Judicial Committee has selected Denver County Court **Judge Doris E. Burd** as its honoree for the 2015 Judicial Reception, set for March 19, 2015 at Davis Graham & Stubbs LLP in Denver.

Judge Burd was appointed to the Denver County Court in January 1989. Those who nominated Judge Burd as the 2015 Judicial Reception honoree described her as “fair, just, and professional to the highest degree” and as someone who “works tirelessly to know the law and impose it fairly and consistently.”

As one individual stated, “Whether you are a prosecutor, defense attorney, witness, victim, juror, or just citizen bystander, Judge Burd

treats you with kindness, professionalism, and respect.” She was recently recognized in the press for filing a grievance against a Denver Sheriff’s deputy after the deputy slammed a pro se inmate into a wall of her courtroom in late 2012.

Judge Burd received her J.D. from Temple University School of Law in 1975. Prior to her appointment to the bench, she was in private practice and worked for two years with the Legal Aid Society. She has served on the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Council and the Washington Park Community Center Board of Directors, and is a 2009 recipient of the Colorado Judicial Institute’s Judicial Excellence Award.

For more information about the 2015 Annual Judicial Reception, or to register to attend, visit www.cwba.org/cwba-calendar/.

Ann Lebeck is a CWBA Board Member. In December 2014, Ann resigned her position from Davis Graham & Stubbs LLP and is currently enjoying spending time with her family and friends.

Catherine (Cat) Shea is a CWBA Board Member and an Assistant Regulation Counsel with the Colorado Supreme Court.



Save The Date: March 19
2015 Judicial Reception
Davis Graham & Stubbs LLP

JD Advantage continued from page 4

But I learned a lot and today I'm doing something I love—and I have never second-guessed my decision to leave.

Debbie: I never practiced law in the general sense. The transition really started with my first job out of law school at a financial/insurance services company. I stayed with them for 18 years before leaving in 2012 and moving back to Denver to work with my own clients on their financial and insurance needs. I have pursued additional education outside of my role as a Financial Consultant. Most notably, I completed my LL.M. at the University of Denver Law School in 2014.

Nicole: I went to law school and graduated with the intention of spending my career practicing law, but it didn't take long to realize how unhappy I was. The transition took only a few months. I started networking, both within and outside of law, and the right opportunity presented itself shortly after I put myself out there as seeking a non-legal career.

How does your legal education translate into your current role?

Alli: My position doesn't require a legal education, but it's hard for me to imagine leading an initiative to reform legal education without having experienced it myself.

Debbie: A legal education gives me great general professional insight, but I do not offer legal advice or services to the financial and insurance clients of our company.

Nicole: Every day, I employ the problem-solving skills I learned in law. I am an emotional and interpersonal problem solver by nature, and law taught me the importance of fact-based and logical decision making. The persuasive writing skills come in handy, as well. DigitalGlobe's in-house legal team handles the actual legal work.

What are the assets and liabilities of your legal background?

Alli: Thanks to my legal education and my time as a practicing lawyer, I have a strong sense of the critical role a lawyer plays for her client and, more broadly, in society. As we talk about what tomorrow's lawyers look like and how best to educate them, I never lose sight of that. I simply can't see my law degree as a liability. As a lawyer, I worked to solve client problems. In my role today, I'm still solving problems.

Debbie: Confidence is the greatest asset. The biggest drawback is that often clients do not understand why I will not draft documents for them even though I review them from my perspective as a Financial Consultant.

Nicole: The greatest asset is confidence. I know that with enough information, I can solve any problem, and that's all I need to be able to do my job well. The biggest liability is that people sometimes want me to be a lawyer. I need to be careful to draw the line between "consultant advice" and "attorney advice."

Why do you choose to be a CWBA member as a non-practicing attorney?

Alli: Being a lawyer—even a non-practicing lawyer—is a privilege. I am committed to strengthening the legal community that serves Colorado, and CWBA is a big part of that.

Debbie: Being an attorney is still part of who I am. Professionally, the CWBA provides a great talent pool for my clients who often need attorney referrals. Personally, there is so much camaraderie that it is fun and fulfilling to participate in the important activities of the group.

Nicole: I became a member when I was practicing law and remained involved to have representation from women lawyers in all different industries. The benefits include networking. Being outside of the legal profession, I am often the only attorney my colleagues and clients know, so I am consistently receiving opportunities to send business to my CWBA contacts. On the flip side, I'm often the only business consultant and technology start-up enthusiast my lawyer friends and colleagues know. This provides me with a unique matchmaker role, and I am passionate about the opportunity to help people make valuable connections.

Jyoti Pandya is a CWBA Publications Committee member and is the founding partner of Pandya Law, LLC, a boutique intellectual property and employment law firm.

*Deborah O'Neil offers securities through AXA Advisors, LLC (NY, NY 212-314-4600), member FINRA, SIPC, offers investment advisory products and services through AXA Advisors, LLC, an SEC-registered investment advisor, and offers annuity and insurance products through AXA Network, LLC. AXA Advisors and its affiliates and associates do not provide legal advice or services. Assured Equity Management Corporation is not a registered investment advisor and is not owned or operated by AXA Advisors or AXA Network. PPG-100158 (01/15)(exp.01/17)

Perspectives continued from page 3

is complicated, and legal representation significantly increases the odds of having a case approved.

What can CWBA members do to help?

Alyssa: The immigration bar in Colorado consists of approximately 250 members, and is very open and welcoming. Many firms provide substantial assistance in pro bono and low bono cases, but there are still so many cases where no attorneys are available to provide legal assistance. This lack of resources is especially compelling when considering that an asylum case is more than four times more likely to succeed when the individual facing potential deportation is represented by an attorney.

Even with no Spanish language skills and no background in immigration law, CWBA members can help. Many volunteer opportunities exist, with training to help these women and children. There have even been opportunities to go down to the detention facility where some of the unaccompanied minors are being held, previously in Artesia, New Mexico but now in Karnes City and Dilley, Texas.

Jennifer: The unaccompanied children’s docket in Denver has increased 500% since August. Many of the children are eligible for “Special Immigrant Juvenile Status,” which involves an order from Family Court. CWBA members who practice in Family Law can assist this population directly, or provide mentorship to immigration attorneys assisting in these cases.

The CBA and AILA recently committed to raising money to fund full-time positions at the Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Network (RMIAN) to represent unaccompanied minors, with the CBA agreeing to match up to \$50,000 raised. If CWBA members are looking for a worthy cause, I encourage everyone to consider donating to this fund.



Perspectives Author:

Justine Pierce is a member of the CWBA Publications Committee and is an Assistant Attorney General in the Health Care Unit at the Colorado Attorney General’s office.

Lathrop Award continued from page 10

She served as a trial judge in the Denver District Court from 1979 until 1990, when she was appointed to the Colorado Court of Appeals, where she served until she retired in 2009. Retired Chief Judge Janice Davidson called her brilliant and said she left a deep and lasting mark on the development of law.



Karen Mathis, Past President of the American Bar Association, called Rothenberg as her first mentor. “Her mentoring keeps marinating for me. And I am just one of a legion of women who have benefited from her,” Mathis said.

Rothenberg was a Founding Mother of the Colorado Women’s Bar Association, as well as its first secretary and its second president. She focused her career on using the legal system to fight for rights of women and inspiring friends and colleagues—particularly women—to fight for their own careers. We are privileged to honor Judge Sandra Rothenberg with the 2015 CWBA Mary Lathrop award, and we know that her story will continue to inspire “legions of [damned!] women” for years to come.

Alli Gerkman is a CWBA Board Member and Director of Educating Tomorrow’s Lawyers, a national initiative of IAALS, the Institute for Advancement of the American Legal System at the University of Denver.

Monica Rosenbluth is a CWBA Board Member and a public finance attorney at Butler Snow, LLP.

Confetti!

Bench Strength

▪ **CWBA Immediate Past President Shannon Stevenson** was appointed by Gov. John Hickenlooper, along with the Chief Justice and the Attorney General, to the Supreme Court Judicial Nominating Commission. She will serve a six-year term which began January 1, 2015 as an attorney and an Unaffiliated from the Second Congressional District.

On the Move

- **Kristi Dorr** joined Dufford and Brown, P.C. as an associate in the Oil & Gas Division.
- **Claire Soto** recently started a new job at The Nelson Law Firm LLC.

You Were Recognized

- **CWBA Board Member Alli Gerkman** was featured in a contributed article in the September 2014 issue of *ABA Student Lawyer* magazine.
- **Mari Newman** was on the cover of the December 15, 2014 issue of *Law Week Colorado* and featured in its "Lawyers of the Year" article.

Congratulations!

- **CWBA President Alison Zinn** became engaged to Andy Sheahan.
- **Erica Siepman** recently married Chris Achatz who is legal counsel for IHS.

- Congratulations to our 26 CWBA members recognized as 2015 Top Lawyers in the January 2015 issue of *5280 Magazine*:
Rebecca C. Alexander
Robbie M. Barr
Cynthia Frazer Covell
Nancy R. Crow
Martha L. Fitzgerald
Christina Gomez
Mindy Greenwald
Carol Hildebrand
Lisa Hogan
Phil James
Pamela Robillard Mackey
Ann C. McCullough
Joan H. McWilliams
Denise K. Mills
Lesleigh W. Monahan
Mari Newman
Valeri S. Pappas
Lorraine E. Parker
Neeti Pawar
Kay J. Rice
Nancy Cornish Rodgers
Sabrina C. Stavish
Shannon Wells Stevenson
Kathryn Stimson
Charlotte N. Sweeney
Gina B. Weitzenkorn

Leading The Way

- **CWBA Board Member/Historian and Past President Patricia Jarzowski** was nominated as 2015-16 President-Elect of the Colorado Bar Association.
- **Charlotte Sweeney** was elected by the Faculty of Federal Advocates (FFA) Board of Directors at its December 4, 2014 annual meeting to the position of FFA President.

You Will Be Missed

- **Judge Orrelle Weeks.**

A fund in memory of Denver Juvenile Court Judge Orrelle Rodgers Weeks has been



established through Mile High United Way's Bridging the Gap Program to assist the City's youth transitioning

from the foster care system into independent living. Judge Weeks was honored by CWBA in 2007 at its annual Judicial Reception for her meaningful work and contribution to the Colorado Judiciary and the City's youth.

Family, colleagues and friends of Judge Weeks determined that many of her professional and community goals are fulfilled through the Bridging the Gap program and invite financial support through donations to the fund.

Contributions may be made as follows:

- Checks may be payable and mailed to Mile High United Way-Weeks: 711 Park Ave. W, Denver, CO 80205; or,
- Electronic payments may be to: <https://secure.donationpay.org/milehighunitedway/judgeweeks.php/>

Submit your Confetti news to publications@cwba.org

The Advocate is published quarterly by the Colorado Women's Bar Association. The deadline for articles is the first day of the month prior to the publication month. *The Advocate* staff reserves the right to edit any material submitted for publication.

Submit articles or comments to the CWBA, Attention: Advocate Editors, 6870 W. 52nd Avenue, Suite 125, Arvada, CO 80002 or to publications@cwba.org.

Send change of address notices to Executive Director, CWBA, 6870 W. 52nd Avenue, Suite 125, Arvada, CO 80002. Phone: (303) 831-1040; Fax: (303) 539-3994; e-mail: execdir@cwba.org.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

February

- 4 - Legal Night | Centro San Juan Diego
- 5 - Winter Networking Luncheon | The Centennial Room at Jonesy's
- 12 - Mom's Luncheon | Gibson Dunn & Crutcher, LLP
- 13 - El Paso Chapter Judicial Reception | El Paso County Judicial Building
- 24 - Boulder Membership Event | Por Winehouse, Louisville
- 27 - "Tea & CLE" | Hotel Teatro (tentative)

March

- 4 - Legal Night | Centro San Juan Diego
- 5 - GRIT Project Event with CBA-YLD | Wheeler Trigg O'Donnell, LLP
- 18 - Alternative Metrics CLE | Gibson Dunn & Crutcher, LLP
- 19 - Judicial Reception | Davis Graham & Stubbs, LLP
- 25 - CWBA/SABA Speed Mentoring Event
- 31 - Membership Reception & Convention Promotion

April

- 1 - New Attorney Mock Interview Event | Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, LLP
- 13 - Annual Charity Fundraiser | Tom's Urban at Larimer Square
- 29 - LawLine 9 | 9News Denver

May

- 15 - 17 - 38th Annual CWBA Convention | The Sebastian Vail



For more information about CWBA events, membership and activities, visit the website at www.cwba.org or contact the CWBA office at (303) 831-1040.