

## **Women in the Law Activities and Events**

A catalog of some events sponsored by WIL sections in various chapters

### **I. Phoenix AZ chapter**

- a. Arizona WIL Lost Boys Service Project: On Saturday October 18, 2008, the Arizona Women in the Law Chapter provided a training seminar to members of the Arizona Lost Boys Center. Nineteen women volunteered their services either in the legal arena or in providing refreshments.

Arizona WIL taught the following classes: Criminal Law, Immigration, Contracts, Family Law and the Arizona Court system. They also addressed overviews of the U.S. Constitution, responsibilities and rights of citizenship and job opportunities in the law. There were approximately twenty-five Lost Boy attendees.

Before WIL began its presentation, a Lost Boy retold us the history of the Lost Boys. We then watched a “60 Minutes” presentation about the Lost Boys. After the WIL presentation we all had the opportunity to talk with one another, answer questions and hear personal stories of trials and accomplishments.

- b. Habitat for Humanity Service Project. On October 10, 2009 the JRCLS Phoenix Chapter’s Women in Law Section had a day of service. Habitat for Humanity needed help painting a recently built duplex. Women in Law was there to help. About 15 women drove many miles and spent several hours painting. An added benefit was having the soon to be new homeowners working side by side with us.

In addition to getting paint on legs, arms and windows, we accomplished the painting task. We not only felt a sense of accomplishment in completing the painting project, we also felt strengthened ties to one another and to Women in Law. It was wonderful to work side by side in a non-legal setting. We got to know each other better while serving others.

### **II. Orange County, CA Chapter**

- a. The first meeting was held at Mimi’s Café in Lake Forest on 2/27/2006. This was a breakfast meeting, with approximately ten people attending. The meeting was primarily a get-acquainted and organizing meeting, where we handed out JRCLS membership forms and lists of events, reviewed why we were meeting, asked each attendee to introduce herself—where she lived, her relationship to the law. We then had a discussion on future topics, format, locations. A handout on the goals and purposes of the group was handed out and discussed.
- b. The second event organized by the Orange County Women’s Outreach Committee (Women in the Law not yet organized on the national or international level) was one of the chapter’s regularly scheduled chapter lunches, held on 3/16/06 at the chapter’s regular meeting place—the conference room of Knobbe, Martens in Irvine. We invited Cheryl Preston, BYU law professor, to speak on “Fashioning Women in Law,” based on a video she had prepared regarding perceptions of women in fashion advertising and the different messages sent by and about women, versus men. This was the first time in its history that a woman had addressed the OC chapter of the JRCLS.
- c. The third meeting was our second breakfast for the OC women lawyers, also held at Mimi’s Café in Lake Forest, on June 5, 2006. This meeting was a panel discussion entitled, “Full-time, Part-time, No time: Law and the Family.” Chapter chair Jeff Shields attended this meeting and indicated he was surprised and enlightened by the women’s perspectives. Panelists were Catherine Evans (part-time lawyer), Dawn Mosley (“dormant” lawyer), Donna Bashaw (full-time lawyer), and Julie Smith (“dormant” lawyer).
- d. On May 30, 2007, we held a lunch meeting at the Macaroni Grill in Costa Mesa. Approximately ten attended. At this meeting we again had introductions and sharing around the table of issues that the women suggested. Chapter chair Jeff Robinson attended this meeting.

- e. In the fall of 2008, the Women’s Outreach committee sponsored a joint lunch meeting (a regular chapter lunch meeting for all members, male and female) featuring OC Presiding Judge, Nancy Stock (not a member of the JRCLS), who spoke on balancing law and home life.
- f. Partly because of increased awareness prompted by the WIL section, two of the recent annual dinner speakers have been women. In 2006, the first woman dinner speaker in the 10-year history of the chapter was Cheiko Okazaki, and in 2008, the annual dinner speaker was Susan Easton Black.
- g. In June 10, 2010, the WIL sponsored a lunch panel presentation, inviting the male members of the chapter as well. The topic was: “Lawyers as Entrepreneurs—starting and running your own law firm.” The panelists were three women—Donna Bashaw, who started and manages a successful elder law firm; Elizabeth Smith, who, with her husband E. Gary Smith, started an Orange County law firm in 1988 which she still manages today; and Stacey Jue, who left private law-firm practice to become corporate counsel for Fed Ex. Approximately 20 men and 5 women attended.

### **III. Los Angeles, CA Chapter**

- a. WIL panel and dinner, 10/21/2010, 7 pm, featuring Lisa Cannon, CEO of StarBuzz, Marilyn Jager, Partner, Morris, Polich, & Purdy, Susasn Kamei, Assoc. Dean, USC; and Ladell Muhlestein, Sr. Counsel, Manning & Marder.
- b. Other events sponsored by the LA chapter which could be used as models for topics for WIL events: (1) “Personal Values in Decision Making & Communications” speaker—Dee Alsop, CEO of Heart and Mind Strategies; (2) “Ethics and Leadership—a Jewish Perspective” speaker a local rabbi and professor; (3) “Challenges facing US Attorneys in the areas of Drug Trafficking, Human Trafficking, Violence against Women and Children and National Security,” speaker—Brett Tolman, former US Atty, Utah

### **IV. Salt Lake City Chapter**

- a. Nov. 4, 2008, inaugural event. Lunch with panelists discussing “Seeking Balance as Women Lawyers.” Panelists were Judge Claudia Laycock, Gwyn McNeal, and Barbara Melendez.
- b. April 13, 2010, JRCLS luncheon presentation featuring Lisa Yerkovich, Evelyn Furse, and Melanie Vartabedian, speaking on “Women Lawyers of Utah's Initiative on the Advancement and Retention of Women in Law Firms.” Panelists Lisa Yerkovich (Shareholder with Ray, Quinney, & Nebeker), Evelyn Furse (Senior City Attorney with Salt Lake City, Corporation), and Melanie Vartabedian (Associate with Ballard, Spahr, Andrews, & Ingersoll, LLP) discussed the results of the Initiative on the Advancement and Retention of Women in Law Firms.

### **V. Seattle Washington chapter**

- a. Two brown-bag luncheons in downtown Seattle in 2010. Attended by 6-8 women. Informal get-acquainted and discussion of issues.

### **VI. Inland Empire (CA) chapter (Riverside/San Bernardino)**

- a. Inaugural WIL-sponsored and organized event, for all members of the chapter: “Who Can Find a Virtuous Litigator? The Influence of Virtue in the Courts.” Featuring a forum of distinguished local judges--Justice Douglas P. Miller, Judge Sherrill A. Ellsworth, Judge Mark A. Cope, Judge Kelly L. Hanson, Judge Michael J. Rushton, Judge Gordon R. Burkhardt, Commissioner Bradley O. Snell. Scheduled for Friday, Oct. 22, 2010, reception 6:30 p.m. (Hors d’oeuvres & Dessert), 7:00 p.m. Forum presentation