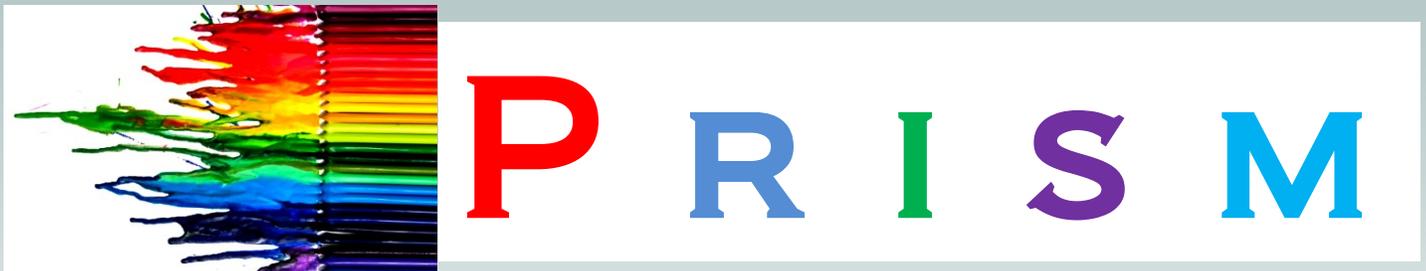
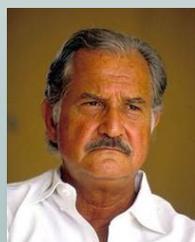


Winter 2018



**ALANYC Chapter Diversity & Inclusion Newsletter — Annual Edition**



*“Recognize yourself in he and she  
who are not like you and me.”*

— Carlos Fuentes

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## A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

SHARON STEWART

**O**n behalf of the ALANYC D&I Committee, I am delighted to share our third annual edition of *Prism*, the newsletter dedicated solely to diversity and inclusion issues. I am honored to serve as the Editor for this issue.

In light of all the current media attention being paid to women and immigrants, we opted to focus this edition on these two topics in particular. This newsletter is filled with pertinent and topical information and includes the following articles, among many: an article on sexual harassment from D&I expert, Mauricio Velasquez; an update on immigration law changes from Roxanne Levine, a partner at one of our member firms; an article about women in the workplace; an article from renowned speaker Ellie Krug on jumping the gender fence; and an article from Gabrielle Lyse Brown, Director of Diversity & Inclusion at the NYC Bar Association regarding trends in inclusion for female attorneys at law firms. We've also included a few personal stories with which many may identify, as well as an interactive puzzle about women and professions from our creative D&I Committee member, Lesya Ospinova. Although we're a majority female chapter, we did not want to neglect our male colleagues and have included an article that provides their perspective. All in all, we think you will find

this a very engaging and mind-opening issue.

We would like to express our thanks to all of the ALANYC D&I Committee members who have worked painstakingly to present this issue to you. We also thank all of our authors and contributors for their expertise and for sharing it with us. We extend our deepest appreciation to our supportive business partners who not only contributed to the newsletter but also help us throughout the chapter year. This newsletter will be distributed in electronic format as well as hard copy format and we sincerely thank John Connolly (a member of this year's D&I Committee) and the team at LDI Color Toolbox for copying and distributing the printed version. Finally, we thank all members of the chapter, past and present, who have worked with us on this issue, providing insight, sharing personal stories, helping us with proofreading, and a host of other things for which we are eternally grateful.

We hope you enjoy the issue and look forward to hearing from you.

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Sharon Stewart  
Office Administrator  
*Lowenstein Sandler LLP*

## MEET YOUR 2017-2018 DIVERSITY & INCLUSION COMMITTEE



### **Santa Medina (Chair)**

- Office Manager, *Brill & Meisel*
- 30 years with current firm
- 29 years as ALANYC Member
- 2017-2018 Diversity & Inclusion Chair
- Married, 2 Adult Children, 1 Grandchild
- Hobbies: Reading, dancing and enjoying time with family and friends.

## MEET YOUR 2017-2018 DIVERSITY & INCLUSION COMMITTEE (CONT'D)

### **Nadia Wagner (Past President Advisor)**

- Office Manager, *Beveridge & Diamond, PC*
- 29 years with present firm, over 30 years in legal management
- ALA member since 1990
- Married for 30 years, 3 children
- Hobbies: Reading, writing, entertaining, travel, music, baseball, volunteer work.

### **Jennifer Brown (ALANYC President-Elect)**

- Firm Administrator, *Weiner Millo Morgan & Bonanno LLC*
- 19 years, 11 months with firm
- 18 years as an ALA/ALANYC member
- Past Chair of ALA Committee on Diversity and Inclusion
- Married for 29 years, 3 adult children, 1 precious granddaughter
- Hobbies: Entertaining, event planning volunteering and giving back

### **Sharon Stewart (Past President/Editor)**

- Office Administrator, *Lowenstein Sandler LLP*
- 20+ years in legal management
- ALA member for 19 years
- Hobbies: Travel and jazz music.

### **Janine Nedd**

- Business Process Manager, *Morrison & Foerster LLP*
- 20+ years in legal management
- Hobbies: Broadway theatre, the opera, museum browsing, networking, hiking, lifting weights, travel.

### **Keisha Dixon**

- Director of Secretarial and Document Services, *Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz*
- 20+ years in legal management
- Special Skills: Transformational Wealth Coach, EFT Practitioner
- Hobbies: Knitting Enthusiast

### **Lesya Osipova**

- Chief Operating Officer, *Reid Michaelis PLLC*
- 7 years in management position
- Hobbies: Reading and music, as well as winter activities.

### **Gina Negrin**

- Legal Administrative Assistant, *Grais & Ellsworth LLP*
- ALA member for 7 years
- Hobbies and Interests: Family, friends, and continuing education classes.
- I am also an avid cyclist, and former C-Sig leader for the New York Cycle Club—"Life is like riding a bicycle. In order to keep your balance, you must keep moving." (Albert Einstein)

### **John Connolly**

- Major Accounts Manager/Legal Markets
- 16 years with LDI (start date 6/19/2002)
- Hobbies: Travel, SCUBA, Skiing, Hiking, Music, Sports
- Interests: History, Music and "The Arts"
- Something you didn't know about me: Recently took my first singing lesson.



## A WORD FROM THE CHAIR

SANTA MEDINA

**A**s I reflect on the time in late summer of 2017 when I was asked to take over as Chair of the Diversity & Inclusion Committee, I can say that at first I questioned whether or not this was something I could learn from, grow into and enjoy doing. The answer is definitely yes to this whole experience.

I've learned so much about myself and about working outside of my comfort zone. I've learned how easy it can be to shy away from doing something different and new simply because of fear of failure, being judged or not having all the answers—or so I thought.

When I took over this responsibility, I found that I didn't know everything and that it was okay to ask for help. I quickly developed a pattern of asking for someone's opinion or for accepting suggestions and ideas that bring new insights and value to an event or project. This taught me to allow for open communication, both verbal or otherwise.

My personal growth as a part of the Committee has been such a positive and fulfilling experience. I have come to know and have interacted with many different people from diverse backgrounds and perspec-

tives. I discovered not only new concepts and terms associated with diversity and inclusion but also learned about each individual committee member as well as others along the way and formed long-lasting friendships.



My curiosity about diversity grew out of my experiences as a child and teenager. I remember looking around and having so many questions about people, their looks, clothing, language and why it made me different from them. I never had the nerve to ask these sometimes sensitive questions. Fast forward to the summer of 2015 when I attended an ALA luncheon and heard that a D&I Committee existed and that this could be my forum to ask and finally get some answers that might satisfy my curiosity. Without hesitation, I inquired about joining the Committee and had the pleasure to

work with our charismatic leader, Jennifer Brown.

With each passing term that I have been involved with the Diversity & Inclusion Committee I continue to grow and learn. The differences in culture, age, disabilities, education, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, national origin and gender allow us to bring a different perspective and value to our personal and professional lives. As I continue my journey in this role I can say that it has been an eye-opening experience. I have been exposed to many diverse people and concepts. This exposure has taught me to remain

open to the differences in others and to make a concerted effort to be inclusive of individuals or groups who may feel like outsiders. We must also keep in mind that some differences exist in areas that are not always visible. The next time you conduct an interview, have a conversation, or visit a new place, remain open-minded and sensitive in how you express yourself verbally as well as through body language.

I am grateful to my Committee members for affording me the opportunity to lead and for their support, to my

*(Continued on page 6)*

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## A WORD FROM THE CHAIR (CONT'D)

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SANTA MEDINA

Advisor Nadia Wagner who provided her guidance and knowledge every step of the way, to Pat Isaacson who had the vision to form the Diversity & Inclusion Committee and to Jenniffer Brown who made it a reality. Special thanks also to our Business Partners for hosting and sponsoring when called upon. We couldn't provide the education to our members without their dedication to ALANYC. Finally, to those members who made an effort to attend our events, thank you and we hope that we are able to continue to provide more educational information to enable you and your firms to strive for more Diversity & Inclusion in the future.

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Santa Medina  
Office Manager  
*Brill & Meisel*  
Your *Diversity & Inclusion* Chair  
2017-2018



***“The differences in culture, age, disabilities, education, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, national origin and gender allow us to bring a different perspective and value to our personal and professional lives.”***



## IMPLEMENTING “BETTER PRACTICES” FOR A MORE INCLUSIVE LEGAL PROFESSION

GABRIELLE LYSE BROWN

**F**or more than a decade, the City Bar benchmarking research has illustrated enhanced diversity efforts in firms as well as overall incremental gains for women and minority attorneys. However, it has also recorded elevated attrition rates of both women and minorities, and a significant subset of law firms still without any minority and women attorneys in firm or department leadership roles.

The 2016 Diversity Benchmarking Report, released in early November, illustrates changes in leadership metrics, including a significant increase of women and minority representation on management committees, as well as notable increases in LGBT attorney self-reporting.

However, despite these advances, racial/ethnic diversity at the partner level, erosion in the associate pipeline, and voluntary attrition remain challenges. Despite the overall gains, the report drills down on the representation of racial/ethnic groups within each level at the firms, and illustrates that minority women make up less than 3% of all partners and 2% of equity partners, compared to white men, who make up 76% of partners and 77% of equity partners in signatory law

firms. Furthermore, the turnover of income partners, where women and minority attorneys continue to be disproportionately represented, has almost doubled. Although minority representation on management committees and other leadership bodies increased in 2016, still nearly



half of firms have no racial/ethnic minorities on their management committees and more than one-third have no minority practice group heads.

So what can be done about this? The 2016 Diversity Benchmarking Report includes a detailed overview of “better practices” that signatory law firms have implemented to enhance attorney development, client relationships, and firm culture, with

summaries of sample initiatives that have yielded results in retaining and promoting minority and women attorneys. A majority of surveyed firms have implemented targeted business development and leadership training, work allocation protocols, initiatives to strengthen relationships with clients, and training for partners to understand and interrupt implicit bias.

The better practices fall into three categories: attorney development, client access and relationships, and training/firm culture.

To advance the careers of associates in firms, the report recommends the following initiatives:

- provide targeted business development and leadership training on communication styles, emotional quotient, leadership presence, and strategic career planning;
- engage practice group leaders in monitoring work allocation protocols and quality of assignments;
- provide opportunities to expand practice area expertise;
- create sponsorship programs, which pair partners and associates, and where the partner is

*(Continued on page 8)*

## IMPLEMENTING “BETTER PRACTICES” FOR A MORE INCLUSIVE LEGAL PROFESSION (CONT'D)

GABRIELLE LYSE BROWN

responsible for the associate's development;

- develop multi-year action plans for diverse associates; and
- provide associates with executive coaches.

To enhance relationships with clients to drive greater diversity results:

- assess client team composition and product on the firm's most significant matters;
- create initiatives to strengthen relationships with clients; and
- engage in efforts to enhance gender diversity on corporate boards, initiatives that have strengthened the leadership skills of women at the partner level.

To improve the firm culture and eliminate biases, the report recommends firm-wide implicit bias training and monitoring exit interviews of departing associates. The report also highlights external resources for law firms, including the [Harvard Implicit Association Test \(IAT\)](#), the [Intercultural Development Inventory \(IDI\)](#), and [The Center for WorkLife Law Bias Interrupters](#).

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Gabrielle Lyse Brown  
Director of Diversity and Inclusion  
*NYC Bar Association*

For more information on the better practices for detailed summaries of specific initiatives, the 2016 Benchmarking Report is available here: <http://bit.ly/2h91LgW>

***“...despite these advances, racial/ethnic diversity at the partner level, erosion in the associate pipeline, and voluntary attrition remain challenges.”***



## JUMPING THE GENDER FENCE

ELLEN (ELLIE) KRUG

I often start my human inclusivity trainings with the comment, “There is no such thing as a Human Owner’s Manual,” and then follow with saying that I sure wish I had such a book as I transitioned genders.

It’s true: we have no big book to turn to for figuring out how to handle the curves that life throws at us. That’s particularly true with understanding how things might be different when one transitions from male to female, something that I did in 2009 at age fifty-two after struggling for decades believing that I could “choose” to stay a man.

beautiful wife, two adorable girls, a house in the best neighborhood, my own trial firm of four lawyers and ten support colleagues, and money in the bank. Most of all, I commanded respect.

I knew much of that would change if I ever allowed myself to live authentically as the true me—a woman—but certainly I had no idea of the true extent of that change.

In a phrase, jumping the gender fence flipped just about everything in my life.

For starters, I had to contend with the basics of what it meant to be

hanging with thirteen-year-old girlfriends on summer afternoons as we tried various ways to make ourselves look pretty.

Nope, I had to learn everything from scratch. And, as I write in my memoir, *Getting to Ellen: A Memoir about Love, Honesty and Gender Change*, it took a lot of trial and error (and frustration) to get down even rudimentary rules about applying foundation, mascara and eyeliner and how to use a curling iron.

There was also trying to understand fashion and how to look professional. I quickly found that fashion magazines can be a real resource and came to understand that there’s an undercurrent of competition between women relative to garnering male attention. (A topic for another day...)

Other things changed too. For example, when I lived as a man, I never really thought about my safety as I walked along a city street at dusk. Walking alone, I thought, was no big deal.

As a single woman, I was suddenly hypervigilant about my surroundings and always aware of who was walking toward or behind me on a city street. In fact, because of this newfound awareness about my physical vulnerability, I took a police-

*(Continued on page 10)*



When I lived as a rich white male attorney in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, I had all the trappings of privilege—a

female. This included learning how to apply make-up and style my hair—I never had the experience of

## JUMPING THE GENDER FENCE (CONT'D)

ELLEN (ELLIE) KRUG

sponsored personal safety class for the first time. I would never have thought to do that as a man.

Most importantly, there was a dramatic shift in how people reacted to what I said as a woman. When I presented as a man and spoke in some professional capacity, people reacted with interest and respect. If I led a meeting or conducted a seminar, audience members took notes and nodded approvingly at my key points; afterward, some would stay to speak and share insights.

Much of this changed when I spoke as Ellie. Now, my words were met with a fair degree of disinterest, as evidenced by the absence of note-taking and the frequency of smartphone checking. Rarely did anyone approach to applaud me for a something I said.

At first, I wondered if this new indifference had to do with me being transgender, but as I looked at how men reacted to most women (versus how they reacted to men), I saw similar behavior.

The point was driven home three years ago at a retreat for a community organization for which I was a board member. During the meeting of thirty or so men and women who ranged in age from mid-thirties to early seventies, I made a passionate point about something on which admittedly, I didn't have a complete

***“I was aghast.  
‘Ignorant’?  
To be called that in a room of  
my peers? Those words would never  
have been said to me as a man.”***

understanding. In response, a man my age stood up—and this man actually knew the subject at hand very well—and pointedly replied, “You are either intentionally misstating the facts or are just plain ignorant.”

I was aghast. “Ignorant”? To be called that in a room of my peers? Those words would never have been said to me as a man.

It was at that very moment that I truly understood how much the tables had turned relative to being female. I had lost all vestiges of male privilege, something that I didn't even understand I owned when I had it.

No matter though. I've plowed ahead as a woman who's trying her best to make a positive difference in the world.

For me, Ellie, that's all I need.

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Ellen (Ellie) Krug  
President and Founder  
*Human Inspiration Works, LLC*

Ellie is the author of *Getting to Ellen: A Memoir about Love, Honesty and Gender Change* (2013) (available on Amazon, Kindle, Nook and iBook). She speaks and trains across the country and internationally on diversity and inclusion topics; visit [www.elliekrug.com](http://www.elliekrug.com) where you can also sign up for her newsletter, The Ripple. Ellie lives in Minneapolis.

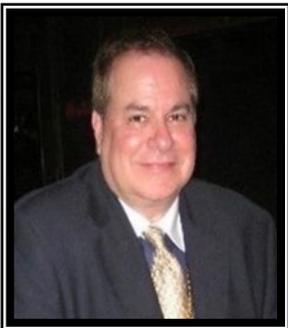
## A Q&A WITH HENRY MACCHIAROLI AND DANA DORNO

There are people who have been members of ALANYC for many years, and others who are brand new to the organization. We thought it would be beneficial for a seasoned member (Henry Macchiaroli) to interact with a new member (Dana Dorno) in a dialogue consisting of questions and answers. We are pleased to provide a video of this reciprocal interview on our chapter website. The questions asked by each are below. To view the video, go to <https://youtu.be/Xg8P3T6TEq4>. Many thanks to John Connolly of LDI Color Toolbox for arranging and coordinating the interview!



### Dana's Questions to Henry:

- What did you learn from an ALANYC educational session recently that helped you positively impact your firm by either sharing or implementing the idea?
- What committee or seats did you hold at ALA or ALANYC if any?
- I just started looking into the information of attending the ALA National Conference in May. It seems very overwhelming, what is my best strategy?



### Henry's Questions to Dana:

- How did you hear about ALA and what was the reason for joining the NYC Chapter?
- What are your impressions of being a new member and what advice would you give to a new member?
- What are some of the events you participated in?
- What do you find most important from the organization?



## IMMIGRANT STORIES I

LESYA OSIPOVA

I came to U.S. at the tender age of 20, without a thought of ever staying in the country forever. I was young, adventurous and alone. I came from Ukraine, a country in Eastern Europe where diversity is measured by how much Russian there is in your Ukrainian. I was lucky enough to participate in a YMCA program, which arranged short and long term contracts for foreign students to work in its camps as counselors, instructors and maintenance staff. The idea was to expose campers to various cultures, history and experiences, which is the epitome of what diversity is all about. The camp I was working in had hundreds of representatives from different countries. There were counselors from India, Israel, South Korea, Bulgaria, China, various African countries and numerous Europeans as well. Needless to say, it was incredible fun to learn words and expressions in different languages (although they were not always clean).

After extensive interviews, a trip to the embassy to apply for a visa, a nine-hour flight and an eleven-hour drive to the camp in Michigan, I was still unable to wrap my head around the fact that I was alone in a foreign country for a one-and-a-half year period! Those first eighteen months were a lot of fun, though punctuated by situations I got myself into by simply not believing where I was or what I was doing. A good example occurred in my first week when I was asked whether I wanted to be the challenge course instructor. Since I had no idea whatsoever what that was, and did not think refusing something in the first week on the job was an option, I said “Okay, sure thing.”

As it turned out I was being asked to train as a climbing tower, high ropes, challenge course and zip line instructor. Ninety percent of my camp time was spent 56 feet off the ground. And, by the way, I was always deathly afraid of heights.

Another incredible experience happened when I ran into the elbow of an emotional talker and accidentally bit my tongue, an event that resulted in 23 stitches and an inability to speak properly for a period of time. While my FIRST EVER experience in a hospital—let alone an American hospital—was more exciting than painful, finding another Russian/Ukrainian speaking person in the middle of the Michigan woods proved to be a real challenge. I was supposed to call my parents every week to report that all was well. Since I was speechless for about 3 weeks after the accident, I found a proxy to call my dad to explain the situation. Thankfully, I was able to find a Romanian counselor who was able to enunciate Russian words written in English letters and relay the basic message to my family.

At some point during those 18 months, I realized that I could not return home without seeing at least some of what I considered the real America, so I decided to take a trip to NYC—a decision that sealed my fate. Many things happened during the years that followed, including having to inform my family that I was not coming home. One thing that was pivotal in my decision was that I felt

*(Continued on page 13)*



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## IMMIGRANT STORIES I (CONT'D)

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LESYA OSIPOVA

free here. There was no security net, no one to turn to for help, and no opportunity to move in with my parents if things did not work out. It was me against the world—but then the world was my limit. Every step I took, every decision I made was scary, and yet most liberating. It felt as if I were born again at age 22. I was learning new things every day. I did not know how to get a job, open a bank account, find a home, which bus to take or where it would take me. But I learned to do all of this and more.

Even though I am now lucky to have been an American citizen for many years, I am, and will remain forever, an immigrant. A person between two very different worlds. A person with two homes.

***“Every step  
I took, every  
decision I  
made was  
scary, and  
yet most  
liberating.”***



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Lesya Osipova  
Chief Operating Officer  
*Reid Michaelis PLLC*



## IMMIGRANT STORIES II

MARCIA BELGOROD



I never thought of my family as “old New York.” After all, my ex-husband had relatives who could trace their roots to original Dutch settlers. Recently, I've realized that my family has been here over 100 years. My great-grandmother is buried in Queens.

My grandparents on my mother's side were among the Eastern European Jews who came to the United States in the early twentieth century. They came from the city of Balta in what is now Ukraine and arrived in 1907 on a ship called the Davenport. At first, like many others, they settled on the Lower East Side and later moved to Brooklyn.

At first, my grandfather worked as a street peddler. When he saved enough money, he opened his own business on Allen Street. For many years, Allen Street was lined with small shops like his that sold neckties. The ties were manufactured in the back of the store and sold up front.

Two of my grandmother's brothers had stayed behind. They had a lucrative business providing boots for the

Tsarist army and had to flee after the Revolution. They made it through Shanghai to Canada but could not enter the United States. According to family lore, my grandmother became a hero by bribing the immigration officials so that her brothers and their families could come through Ellis Island.

One of her brothers had two daughters who were close in age to my mother and her sister. My grandmother assumed that they had arrived with very little so she brought hand-me-down clothes to Ellis Island for the two girls. Her brothers had been quite affluent and were offended by it. I guess no good deed goes unpunished.

Given my own family history, I can only empathize with those immigrants who have followed, with or without proper papers.

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Marcia Belgorod  
Retired, but open to new opportunities  
mkbelgorod112@gmail.com



## IMMIGRANT STORIES III: HER STORY

JENNIFFER A. BROWN

I am one of the fortunate few who can trace my heritage back to the mid-1700s, when my great-great-great-grandfather lived in Scotland. Not much is known about him but a century later, my great-great-grandfather migrated to Jamaica in the early 1800s and immediately became a landowner/overseer. At that time, Jamaica was a British colony and the country was

Growing up in Jamaica, my family was considered to be middle class primarily because of my dad's family, as my mom was of Afro-Jamaican heritage, which at the time of post-colonial class consciousness, did not favor dark-skinned Jamaicans. My parents had maids who took care of my siblings and me while they worked. My mom ran the local post office while my

girls for a collective total of fifteen years.

Many, many years later when we all joined my dad in America, we pledged to achieve as if we never lost years of progress and maintain our standard of living. We experienced great setbacks, disappointments and difficulties as we were shocked to learn that our lives would

***“Today, my siblings and I are not only successful professionals working in a variety of disciplines, but we’re also Naturalized American citizens—call us “Jamericans”!”***

flooded with British, Scottish and Welsh citizens. With this acquisition came much prestige, money, status, friends in high places and an excellent standard of living. He eventually married a native Jamaican woman with whom he had my grandfather. My grandfather then married my grandma, who was a beautiful Jamaican-Indian woman known as a Taino. Together they had twelve children who visually looked like the United Nations.

dad was a bookkeeper at the sugar factory. They provided us with a good life, but death came knocking very early, and my mother passed away in 1968 before her children got to know her well enough. This began our family reunification process to the United States of America, beginning with my dad who migrated to this country in 1977, after placing my older sister and me in a girls' boarding school in Jamaica. That would become home to his three

be changed forever, and we had to start over as if all the progress we had made in our home country never happened. However, despite having to switch careers and forget our original dreams to create new ones, despite being told our education was not valuable, insignificant and wasn't on par with the American standards, despite my sister-in-law being unable to find employment as a lawyer after practicing in Jamaica for three years prior to migrating,

*(Continued on page 16)*

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## HER STORY (CONT'D)

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JENNIFFER A. BROWN

despite being rejected for jobs because we didn't have North American experience, we all dug deep and kept our focus.

The life of an immigrant is often-times very challenging. One frequently is forced to take backward steps in order to make significant progress, especially if you migrated from a developing (so called third world) country or from a non-English speaking country. Children are too often demoted in school because of the assumption that they're from an inferior academic standard, but nothing could be further from the truth for Jamaicans as our education is based on the British system, which is of a very high academic standard. One of the biggest hurdles I encountered in the US was to hear Americans tell me they didn't understand when I spoke, despite my best efforts to speak slowly. I knew I was speaking perfect English so I was confounded by that kind of response. Some immigrants feel compelled to take speech classes to avoid that negative response, and I myself, considered that a few times. Immigrants have to acclimate to many new factors, e.g., the changing climatic conditions that don't exist in their home country, the American accents, the American cuisine, the American teaching style and school system, and more, all of which can be daunting for someone who is trying to geographically navi-



gate their way through a new country. At the time of my migration, I was pleasantly surprised to be able to watch 24 hours of TV! Some changes were good and easy but most were daunting.

Today, my siblings and I are not only successful professionals working in a variety of disciplines, but we're also Naturalized American citizens—call us “Jamericans”! And our children are proud to be first generation Americans, achieving the highest level of education possible and taking advantage of all the opportunities available to them. They recognize the sacrifices that were made for them and love to hear stories of our family history from my dad, who himself is now enjoying retirement in Florida.

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Jennifer A. Brown  
Firm Administrator  
*Weiner Millo Morgan & Bonanno  
LLC*



## THE “#METOO” REVOLUTION

JANINE NEDD



The origins of “#MeToo” began in 1997 when former Philadelphia activist, Tarana Burke, listened to a 13-year-old girl share her experience of sexual abuse. This young girl’s experience left Ms. Burke at a loss for words, “I didn’t

have a response or a way to help her in that moment, and I couldn’t even say ‘me too.’” On October 15, 2017, in the wake of numerous sexual assault allegations against Harvey Weinstein, Alyssa Milano, famous television daughter from the “Who’s the Boss” series, tweeted, “If you’ve been sexually harassed or assaulted write ‘me too’ as a reply to this tweet.” Thousands of famous/not famous women and men began to respond, some with personal stories of sexual assault. The purpose of “#MeToo” is to give people a sense of the magnitude and prevalence of sexual assault, harassment, violence and inappropriate behavior, and to put the focus back on the victims.

Though the floodgates have opened, many find that the open secrets extracted from “#MeToo’s” Pandora’s box are hard to accept and openly discuss. Some focus instead on the questions, “Why are these women coming forward now?” and “Why didn’t they report it when it happened?” Some answers are: they did report it but were not believed; they were too ashamed; they incorrectly blamed themselves for their abuser’s actions; or they were afraid of losing their livelihood. Let’s take a look at the case that coined the phrase “sexual harassment.”

On October 11, 1991, 35-year-old law professor Anita Faye Hill appeared before the Senate Judiciary Committee to testify about the sexual harassment she experienced while working for Clarence Thomas. Ms. Hill graduated valedictorian of her high school class and at-

tended Yale Law School. She worked for the Department of Education, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and taught contract law at the University of Oklahoma. These are all very impressive achievements; however, when Ms. Hill dared to speak her truth, she was not believed, ridiculed by the press and portrayed by witnesses as irrational, sexually loose and suffering from a rare psychological disorder that causes women to fantasize sexual relationships with powerful men.

Let’s review a similarity between the exposure of Bill Cosby and Harvey Weinstein. Both of these men were publicly exposed by other men. Bill Cosby was accused of alleged rape by Hannibal Burgess during a stand-up comedy performance; Harvey Weinstein by Roan Farrow in a New Yorker article. In the past, when women reported sexual improprieties an “open secret” was born. When men report it, it becomes front-page news. “#MeToo” has not only been revolutionary by giving a voice to both women and men, it has contributed to the swift firing and suspension of serial sexual predators and perpetrators alike.

We live in a country where the burden of proof is on the victims; “innocent until proven guilty” is the foundation of our courts. As a society, maybe we need to ask ourselves, why are we so afraid of discussing open secrets? If society, as a whole, can begin to acknowledge its fear of such topics, maybe we can begin to understand the victims’ fears as well.

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Janine Nedd  
Business Process Manager  
*Morrison & Foerster LLP*

<sup>1</sup> The Woman Who Created #MeToo Long Before Hashtags, Sandra E. Garcia, New York Times, Oct. 20, 2017.



## DOCUMENTARY: *MISS REPRESENTATION*

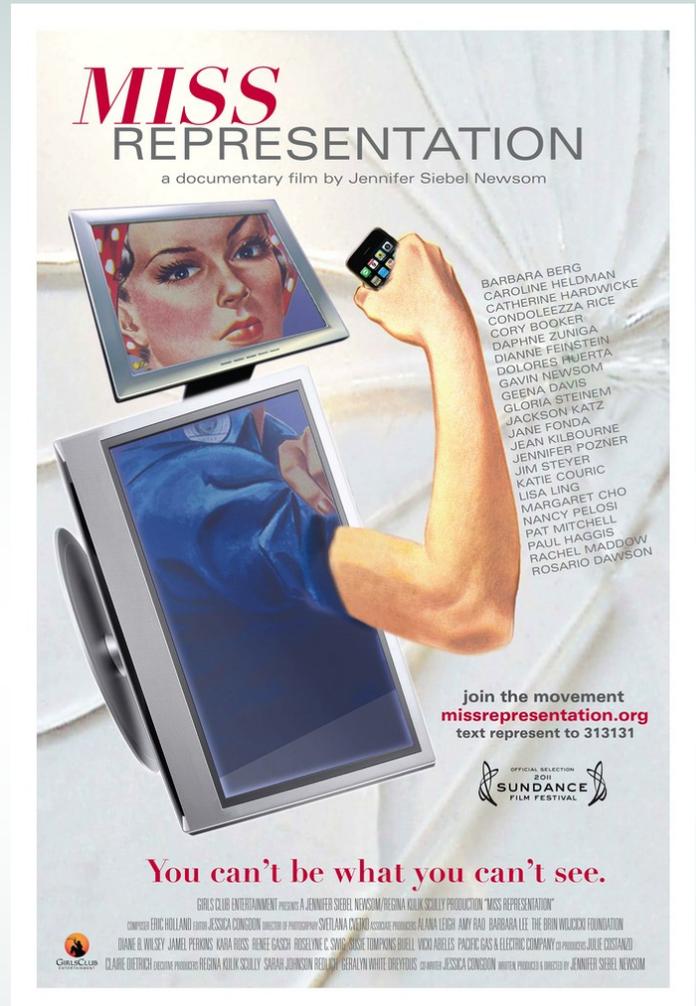
NELLIE LEFTERATOS

As part of its Women's Initiative, the NY office of Smith Gambrell & Russell LLP hosted a Ladies Movie Night at the IPIC theater complex in lower Manhattan. The event kicked off with a cocktail party at the complex. Guests then proceeded to a private screening of the documentary *Miss Representation*, complete with luxury seating, popcorn and drinks in the theater.

*Miss Representation*, an official selection of the 2011 Sundance Film Festival, was a timely choice of films in light of all of the renewed awareness of sexual harassment. The documentary examined how women are portrayed in the media and the resulting stereotype that a girl's value lies in youth and beauty and not in leadership and intelligence, contributing to the under-representation of women in positions of influence and power. The film featured contributions by many notable women including Condoleezza Rice, Katie Couric and Betty Friedan, as well as interviews with girls and boys still in high school.

Even though the audience was generally aware of the many issues girls face growing up and women face in the work force, the high statistics cited in the documentary about gender-based harassment, abuse and bullying were eye-opening, as was the extent to which girls have a negative body image and lack self-confidence.

A lively discussion and more networking followed. SGR's Women's Initiative hopes that screening will inspire the audience to find ways to increase awareness of the problems and will be a catalyst to do more to bring about change.



Nellie Lefteratos  
New York Office Administrator  
*Smith, Gambrell & Russell, LLP*

*Miss Representation* is a 2011 American documentary film written, directed, and produced by Jennifer Siebel Newsom.

***“...the high statistics cited in the documentary about gender-based harassment, abuse and bullying were eye-opening, as was the extent to which girls have a negative body image and lack self-confidence.”***



## WOMEN AND THE WORKPLACE

FRANCINE E. LAHM

American history tells us women fought for their rights and knew suffrage was very important for progress. They were right. When the U.S. was founded, its female citizens did not share all of the same rights as men, including the right to vote. ([www.history.com](http://www.history.com))

By the late 1800's, women had made significant strides. Progress afforded women advancement in many areas including property rights, employment and education. Although Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton devoted 50 years to the women's suffrage movement, unfortunately, neither lived to see women gain the right to vote. However, their work and that of many other suffragettes, contributed to the ultimate passage of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which was ratified on August 18, 1920 and granted American women the right to vote. (<https://socialwelfare.com>).

That was then. Some things have changed.....

For the first time ever, women now make up a greater percentage of college graduates than men. What this generally means is that more women are able to find and maintain good opportunities, if they choose to. Choice...now there's another interesting word. Women have

***“We have made progress.  
But it’s slow progress.”***

many more choices today than they had in the past. We can choose to work, not to work, work part-time, work out of the home, work split shifts, etc. This flexibility is owed in part to the work of organizations like NOW (the National Organization for Women) and Equality Now—two of

“The labor force participation rate—the percent of the population working or looking for work—for all women with children under age 18 was 70.5 percent in 2016. The participation rate for married mothers (67.9 percent) remained lower than the rate for mothers with other mari-



many groups dedicated to the advancement of women.

In 1966, 46.4% of all American women between the ages of 18 and 65 worked outside the home. We see a different picture now. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics,

tal statuses (76.0 percent).”

What constitutes a workplace today? The definition has surely changed. Is it a tall building with many floors? Your neighborhood Starbucks? Perhaps, your kitchen

*(Continued on page 20)*

## WOMEN AND THE WORKPLACE (CONT'D)

FRANCINE E. LAHM

table? Technology has significantly changed the way women work today, allowing for more flexibility and the ability to shed the distinct barrier between having both a satisfying personal life and a meaningful professional life. In order to make it easier for women in the workplace, many organizations now offer a number of benefits to women including flexible schedules, on-site child care and richer maternity benefits. These changes have enabled firms to recruit and retain talent they otherwise may have lost.

And some things have not changed all that much....

Women have had the right to vote for some time now. But, this privilege has been significantly extended into the workplace. For instance, are we voting in the Boardroom? On Leadership Teams? Are we making executive level decisions? Some of us are, yet not as many as our male counterparts. We have made progress. But it's slow progress.

Have we been able to get past the stigma of traditional female roles? To some extent, yes. However, we have a long way to go. Take for example the term "work/life balance", a term that always seems to be associated more with women than men. Why is that? Why is it necessary for WOMEN to have a



balanced life between work and home? Is anything else in your life balanced? Is your social life balanced? Is your checkbook balanced? Are your children balanced? Is your diet balanced? The need to fulfill harmony on both sides of the equation leads to a lot of stress.

I was fortunate to speak with Jessica Neuwirth who is President of the ERA Coalition, an organization working to support passage and ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. She is one of the founders of Equality Now, an international human rights organization aiming to end violence and discrimination against women. I asked Jessica, "What is the first thing you think of when I use the term 'Women and the Workplace?'" Her reply was, "We know women make on

average 79 cents for every dollar a man makes (less for women of color). I would say unequal pay and sexual harassment are the two big sex discrimination issues in the workplace. Sexual harassment is rampant, as we all know from '#MeToo', and even though it is only getting mainstream attention now, all women have always known it is an issue. The problem has been lack of effective recourse and accountability."

According to Susan M. Heathfield's article, How to Promote Women in Leadership Roles (updated 7/24/17) which appeared in The Balance, "women still have the challenge to make what men make for the same job and to attain the promotions that will place them in leadership roles. But, I am convinced that women have made progress and that they can make more." Heathfield's article includes an interview with Susan Lucas-Conwell, the Global Chief Executive Officer at Great Place to Work®. An accomplished business leader, Ms. Lucas-Conwell provides keen perspective on how building and a maintaining great workplace culture drives business success. She is also an expert on how women can flourish in leadership roles in organizations. After reading the full interview, I agree with Ms. Heathfield's assertion that the biggest

*(Continued on page 21)*

## WOMEN AND THE WORKPLACE (CONT'D)

FRANCINE E. LAHM

challenges women face in the workplace today have to do with what I referred to above as work/life balance—essentially being responsible for doing many things at once and expecting to be good at all of them.

Ms. Lucas-Conwell went on to say that a key step in overcoming these obstacles is to be aware and stay true to your strengths. Women leaders sometimes feel pressured to conform to what is seen as the male leadership role. There are benefits to having women on executive boards and in key leadership roles. We bring a different perspective and insight that can help make a company more effective with its business challenges.

She also pointed out that, "...As a recent Catalyst.org study reported, Fortune 500 companies with three or more women on the Board outperform other companies with 53 percent more returns on equities, 42 percent more return on sales and 66% more return on invested capital. Yet, for example, according to the National Center for Women and Information Technology, women executives account for only 6 percent of chief executives at the top 100 tech companies."

Suffice it to say that there is much work remaining and women will continue to forge ahead, even if it's at a much slower pace than we'd like.

One of the greatest aspects of mentorship and networking is that women tend to pay it forward. We forge together and empower one another. I am proud to be a Woman in the Workplace and look forward to what the future will hold for women.

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Francine E. Lahm  
Director of Human Resource  
*Mendes & Mount, LLP*

***“We bring a different perspective and insight that can help make a company more effective with its business challenges.”***



## THE MEANING OF DIVERSITY

SHARON STEWART



In 2018 law firm managers still recognize the struggle with diversity and inclusion in our profession. Recently, some companies are insisting that the work performed on their matters include a more diverse mix of professionals. Hewlett Packard has opted to reduce law firm fees if the teams are not made up of more diverse individuals. Other companies may join that sentiment.

As an experiment, during the ALANYC's Symposium this past Fall, the Diversity & Inclusion Committee put up two questions as a think tank asking members to comment on the following: **"What does Diversity mean to You?"** And **"What does Diversity mean to your Firm?"** The members were asked to post their responses on each board answering both questions to the best of their ability

and jotting down the first thing that came to one's mind. The answers were surprising.

You would think that many big law firms would have embraced inclusivity; however, the numbers of diverse professionals is not in step with the mosaic we see in mainstream America. Furthermore, the number of female partners promoted is also out of balance—especially when considering the number of women applying to law schools. It could be years before that comes into balance.

Of the questions asked, **"What does Diversity Mean to You?"**, the answers were: Respect, Acceptance, Unique, Expanded Learning, Embracing Differences,

*(Continued on page 23)*

## THE MEANING OF DIVERSITY (CONT'D)

SHARON STEWART



Inclusion, Humankind has Peace, Equality, All In, Friendship, Different Talents Cultures and Personalities, Synergy, Fair, New Insights, Collaboration, Everything, Understanding, Different = Together, Team.

Some of the answers were repetitive and it is clear that ALANYC members entrusted with running the back end business of their firms get it. Really get it. In some ways, their responses were inspiring.

On the flip side, when posing the next question, “**What does Diversity Mean to Your Firm?**” remarkably, the answers were not as positive or hopeful. The responses given to that question were: Strength in our Differences, Reaching New Audiences, Challenge, Fairness, Needing Work, Money, Treating all the Same, Getting Along,

Equal, All In!, Intrinsic, Collaboration, Equality, Inclusive, Nothing, Culture, Not Nearly Enough, Needs work, Necessary Evil, Do It, Mixed Clients.

The take away from this project shows that more attention needs to be focused on “What makes us different is what makes us special.” We can only make our firms stronger by being as diverse as the clients we serve, especially in today’s global economy.

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Sharon Stewart  
Office Administrator  
*Lowenstein Sandler LLP*



## THE IMPACT OF U.S. IMMIGRATION CHANGES OVER THE PAST YEAR ON BUSINESS UNDER THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

ROXANNE LEVINE

**D**espite the fact that the new administration has not had any legislative success in the immigration arena over the past year, U.S. Citizenship Services has issued many updated policy memos changing procedures for non-immigrant and immigrant petitions filed with United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

Abroad, U.S. consular posts have also expressed changes in procedure and policy in the nonimmigrant area as a result of new policy memos issued by U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson. This impact on the business community has resulted from the fallout of the April 2017 Executive Order, “Buy American, Hire American,” which has been interpreted by U.S. governmental agencies to assure protection of the U.S. labor market.

Among the highlighted policy changes:

### **Increased Worksite Enforcement**

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement recently announced plans to increase worksite enforcement by significantly multiplying time spent on the enforcement area, documenting undocumented employees for detention and removal, and prosecuting employers for knowingly hiring or retaining workers without valid employment authorization documents. It is expected that on-site

inspections will increase in the upcoming fiscal year with ensuing higher fines. We recommend that employers prepare compliance programs, conduct internal I-9 audits and assure that any I-9 review by governmental authorities will stand up to expected scrutiny.

### **Increased Challenges in the H-1B Visa Petition Area**

USCIS concluded, shortly before the 2017 H-1B cap filing period that the majority of entry level and more sophisticated computer related occupations would no longer be eligible for H-1B classification.

Further, USCIS has recently expanded these H-1B challenges for entry-level positions to many other professional occupations, including accountants, sales managers, architects and others, thus chilling the H-1B visa category for those employers wishing to hire and train entry-level talent. We expect that entry-level U.S. college level and university graduates will have difficulty securing H-1B visas with U.S. employers as a result of the entry-level salary pushback by USCIS.



### **Personal Interviews Related to Adjustment of Status Applications**

USCIS announced that commencing October 1, 2017, it would revive the requirement for personal interviews for employment-based permanent resident applicants. This reverses a 20-year policy of the government—it had previously waived interviews for employment sponsored applicants for U.S. permanent residence. Each family member will be scheduled to appear for interview to confirm the ongoing validity of the underlying immigrant petition of the principal applicant. Further inquiries by the government could include assuring that all family members have maintained legal status in the United States, do not have criminal records and have only worked with employment authorization during their stay in the United States. USCIS also announced that it expects that there will be delays in processing and completing the adjustment of status

*(Continued on page 25)*

**THE IMPACT OF U.S. IMMIGRATION CHANGES OVER  
THE PAST YEAR ON BUSINESS UNDER THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION:  
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW (CONT'D)**

ROXANNE LEVINE



States. The Secretary of State also issued guidance to U.S. consular officials to further seek assurances that U.S. workers are not displacing U.S. nationals when issuing the non-immigrant visas.

For the U.S. business community, which has long relied on global talent for its continued success and expansion of operations in the United States, the hiring of a foreign national has become more challenging and restrictive. Therefore, consultations with professionals in the field are warranted. We continue to monitor administrative changes and report on updates.

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interview for individuals applying for such benefits.

**USCIS Rescinds Its Policy of Giving Deference to its Prior Adjudications**

USCIS rescinded its long-honored policy guidelines instituted in April 2004 of giving deference to previously adjudicated nonimmigrant petitions where parties, facts and circumstances of the case remained the same. Under a new October 23, 2017 policy guideline, USCIS removed this policy and guided examiners to review any requests for the extension of nonimmigrant petitions (*i.e.*, H-1B, L-1, E-2 or O visa petitions) as if reviewing cases anew. The immigration bar expects many more challenges (“requests for evidence”) for cases that had previously processed on a routine basis, thus jeopardizing those with long-pending residence cases and delays due to quota backlogs. The net result could be that long pending applicants for permanent residence

will not be permitted to remain in the United States for the duration of time that the green card case winds its way through the immigration system and the expected quota backlog and delays.

**State Department Change in Policy to Issuance of Timing of Activities in the United States**

In an instruction issued in August 2017 to U.S. consular posts abroad, Secretary of State Tillerson wrote that visitors requesting visas before entering the United States must follow through on stated plans for at least three months. If the applicant for the visa fails to mention in an interview with a U.S. consular official that they might marry, secure a job or attend school, it will be presumed they have committed a misrepresentation of their intentions, and they could be charged with fraud. A consequence to this determination by a consular official would be the foreign national’s failure to secure a new visa or change status in the United



## WOMAN-OWNED BUSINESSES THRIVE

SARAH GILLEN

**N**ow is a great time to be a Minority and/or Woman-Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) in New York. Over the last few years, there has been a significant increase in promoting MWBE in the New York local and state government. Both Governor Cuomo and Mayor de Blasio have set a 30% goal for MWBE contract utilization. Considering the multi-billion dollar budgets of both governments, there is great potential to grow a business. Additionally, and perhaps more importantly, both the city and state are supporting MWBEs through educational and technical resources.

As owner of Emergency Skills, Inc., I am one of the over 9 million women\* who own their own business in the United States. ESI was founded in 1977 and I became an equity partner in 1997. My company specializes in educating corporate and government employees to save lives through dynamic training programs and easy to use Automated Defibrillator equipment. My role in the company is sales, administration, and periodically teaching. It is challenging to manage all aspects of my role and I con-

stantly evaluate the roles and responsibilities of my office team and me. My interactions through sales and instruction, however, are my favorite ways to keep a pulse on the company and refuel my passion in the business.

While ESI is a woman-owned business, we often wondered if it was necessary or worth it to become certified. Becoming certified is an arduous task and the payoff was not



clear. In fact, was it actually an indicator that your company may be too small and without the resources to scale? A potential client may harbor other concerns. For example, during a sales meeting, I was asked by a male prospect how long I'd be around since I was at that age when women leave to have children. I did earn that company's business, but

interestingly, while I'm still here, it is he who's retired. Our concern had been—what was the message we were sending if we advertised we were a “woman-owned business”?

The economy, however, told a different story than what was commonly believed. According to a study published in 2014 commissioned by American Express, nationally, the number of women-owned firms has increased by 68% since 1997. Revenue and employment growth rates were at a pace greater than that of all other privately held businesses. Women-run businesses were capable and resourceful! Recognition of, and investment in, MWBEs began.

By 2006, we knew it was time for ESI to become a certified WBE. Because of our location and markets, our first certification effort was through the NYS Economic Development Corp. We completed the necessary forms and gathered the paperwork including tax returns, copies of contracts and commercial leases, documentation of incorporation to validate who owned and operated the business. The application process culminated with an in-

*(Continued on page 27)*

## WOMAN-OWNED BUSINESSES THRIVE (CONT'D)

SARAH GILLEN

person interview after which we were approved. The process took two years to complete. Certification with NYC Small Business Services (SBS) followed shortly thereafter. Renewing certification is just as time consuming, but we have maintained our certification for nearly 10 years.

Since 2006, ESI has experienced significant growth in part to the recognition of woman-owned businesses. Some of our contracts where our certification was requested include the NYC Department of Education, the largest AED deployment in the world, the NYC Department of Health and BNY Mellon.

SBS has been a great asset to me for my continuing education as a business owner. In general, small businesses are run by people who have more passion than business knowledge. For this reason, SBS offers a variety of training programs including Strategic Steps for Growth, a comprehensive business course held at New York University which I completed over the 2014-2015 school year. The course content included finance, human resources, marketing and sales. This course helped me on many levels. First, while I receive a lot of on the job training, it was my first formal education in finance where I learned to dig deeper into my financial reports and methods to evaluate my business success. Second, being a busi-

ness owner can be lonely, having a group with whom to discuss shared experiences is invaluable (just like the ALA!). Finally, I have become a part of this great network with both SBS and NYU. I continue to participate in classes and conferences to keep my business skills up to date and learn from my peers. Additionally, I have people with whom to speak when I am faced with new businesses challenges.

Owning your own business is exciting and gives you greater control over your destiny, but it is not for the faint of heart. There is very little down time and between employees, clients and government rules there are new trials daily. Fortunately, there are resources available for those with a strong idea and the drive to succeed.

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Sarah Gillen  
*Emergency Skills, Inc.*

### Resources:

**NYC Small Business Services**  
<http://www1.nyc.gov/site/sbs/businesses/certify-with-the-city.page>

**NYS Dept. of Economic Development**  
<https://esd.ny.gov/doing-business-ny/mwbe>

**National Women Business Owners Corporation**  
[www.nwboc.org](http://www.nwboc.org)

**National Association of Women Business Owners**  
[www.nawbo.org](http://www.nawbo.org)

\* American Express Open Study,  
*The 2014 State of Women-Owned Businesses Report*





## GENDER QUAKE 2.0

MAURICIO VELASQUEZ

**M**any years ago I authored an article entitled “Gender Quake” and it was about the Anita Hill-Clarence Thomas hearings—the first time sexual harassment and gender equity issues entered our living rooms (through TV) and never left. Almost like a tsunami of gender insensitivity—but it came and went fast. Before this—Anita Hill-Clarence Thomas—sexual harassment issues did not make the newspaper or even local news—not even a blip or a mention. Now, national, international news and hours of coverage (educating public) on the nightly news and cable is the norm, the new normal.

We just experienced another major Gender Quake—the “Gender Quake of Quakes” and the aftershocks are just as bad. Ailes, O’Reilly, Weinstein, C.K., Rose, Lauer, and so many more “household names are going down in flames.” You see as a Sexual Harassment Prevention Trainer, Consultant, Coach and Strategist I have been to this rodeo before (for 25 years), and I do see changes—tectonic shifts in the national conversation.

### What are the Lessons Learned from all of the national headlines?

- Is our corporate culture—our workplace climate—gender friendly, inclusive (diversity friendly and welcoming)? Safe?

- ◇ Corporate Culture—what people do when no one is watching—MV
- ◇ Where were the “other men” in all of these organizations—why did they not speak up for the victims? I am sure they saw something, heard something—HR must investigate even gossip, or hearsay
- ◇ What was the impact on turnover, morale, hiring?
- There is no such thing as hush money—the money the target/victim receives to leave the organization (they don’t stay silent, “word gets out”) quietly, discreetly
- Once these issues get into the public sphere—social media and traditional media get ahold of it—there is an immediate impact (stock price hit for example) on brand, brand loyalty, customer mindset, corporate image
- The mobile phone is the new “evidence generator” with an audio, video tape, voice mail or text the victim has evidence (not saying necessarily admissible in court) but harasser cannot deny or say “I did not do that” or “I don’t remember”
- ◇ You see if we don’t get the harasser on the actual harassment, we will get them on the lie and cover up—we do our



(Continued on page 29)

## GENDER QUAKE 2.0 (CONT'D)

MAURICIO VELASQUEZ

*fair share of investigations and audits*

- Capitalism will prevail—legal fees, settlement monies, advertisers abandoning, customers boycotting—the cost of “keeping the harasser” is too great—*Fox News numbers do not include legal fees, turnover (morale), recruiting challenges, Weinstein Co. could go bankrupt*

◇ Did these organizations “Do the right thing” or “Was the math just not working anymore?”

- Leadership of the Organization will be questioned—When did you know? (if you knew for a long time and did not remove harasser organization is liable for institutional issues—“Prior Knowledge”—cover up, greater liability?)

### **Ultimately Be Proactive, Not reactive—Risk Management 101—“Affirmative Defense”**

- Check your policy—make sure it is clear and up to date (with clear reporting processes)
- Make sure there is a formal and trusted complaint process (*DTG even serves as an Ombudsman for clients*)—there are people you can go to besides your own boss and you are “allowed or encouraged to go outside your department” and they are trusted

- You have conducted training—recently, regularly (once every year to two, CA every year)—“live, in-person” for Supervisors and Managers—e-learning for all (1 hour workshop) is not enough
- Lastly when something happened—the organization responded quickly and decisively

### **A Checklist—Questions for any organization that does not want to be the “Next Harassment Headline”**

1. What does your policy say? Does it protect and clearly define consequences of a “false accusation?” Back door has to be closed and tight, not just the front door.
2. When was your Policy last updated? *Came across a client with no policy*
3. When was your Policy last distributed? *Came across a client that had never distributed*
4. Who can employees go to—to complain? *Outside direct chain of command*
5. Do you have a “hotline” and are all of your complaint processes and procedures trusted and have high integrity? Do you have an ombudsman service in place? (3rd party outside channel for complaints)

6. When was the last time you conducted training for all of your employees, specifically for your supervisors, managers, and leaders? *If you cannot remember—get busy rolling it out.*
7. How quickly does HR and the organization respond to complaints?

Gender Quake—my first article, very interesting to go back and read that article and see how far we have come since Anita Hill and Clarence Thomas.

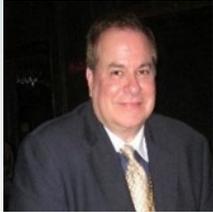
My mentor was Linda Shevitz—she taught me everything she knew about sexual harassment, gender equity, etc. When she led workshops she was labeled “a radical feminist” and I could do the same workshop and people would comment—“very thought provoking, very enlightening.” Same workshop, same content. How far have we really come? “Economics trumps hate or capitalism often prevails over morality,” I like to say.

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Mauricio Velásquez, MBA  
President  
*The Diversity Training Group*

## THE MALE PERSPECTIVE ON ALA

**S**ince our Chapter is predominantly female, we wanted to get the perspective of some of our male members and BPs and asked them the following questions:



**Henry Macchiaroli**  
Controller,  
Phillips Nizer LLP



**Richard Colucci**  
Distinctive Offices, Inc.



**Jonathan Sheppard**  
CEO, J. Sheppard  
Associates/  
DayBreak Legal Staffing



**Tom Barone**  
Chief Financial Officer,  
Sichenzia Ross  
FERENCE Kesner LLP



**Kevin O'Sullivan**  
Konika Minolta  
Business Solutions,  
USA Inc.

### **How long have you been associated with the ALA?**

**Henry:** Since 1992.

**Richard:** Only since this past May (however, I used to be a member under a different company name about 15 years ago).

**Jonathan:** Over 22 years - first in my former position and the last 18 as the owner of DayBreak Staffing.

**Tom:** Since 1994.

**Kevin:** 20 years - since 1997

### **Why did you join the organization?**

**Henry:** Evelyn Maiman, a past president, encouraged me. We were members of the Controllers' Roundtable Discussion Group. I also wanted to learn law firm management as an extension of my finance experience.

**Richard:** My firm's niche is refreshing occupied office space. Law firms have always been our number one vertical, so we felt by becoming a member we could continue to learn best

practices for working with the law firm community and to always improve our offerings to them.

**Jonathan:** Networking opportunity to reach administrators and HR people alike.

**Tom:** I felt that the ALA was an excellent learning vehicle and would be a great way to interact with other law firm professionals to enhance my career. Also, my good friend, Henry Macchiaroli was involved on the board and encouraged me to join the board, which was really when I started to be more heavily involved.

**Kevin:** I started my career with Eastman Kodak Office Imaging as a Legal Market Specialist so I wanted to learn everything I could about law firms, their structure, special requirements, work environment, applications, key contacts, etc. Being a part of the ALA has always been educational and has helped me to understand how law firms work. Firms may

*(Continued on page 31)*

## THE MALE PERSPECTIVE ON ALA (CONT'D)

come in different sizes and have unique specialties but many of the systems, software, and processes they utilize are very similar and are consistent across organizations. The sales aspect of what I do was really a secondary reason for joining but I did believe that the more I knew about law firms in general, the better I could serve the needs of the firms I engaged with.



**How would you assess your experience as a member/sponsor: Do you believe that your membership in the NYC Chapter has been beneficial? In what ways?**

**Henry:** Great Networking, immediate resources, life time friends and relationships.

**Richard:** My experience to date has been terrific. It has been beneficial in many ways. There have been numerous business opportunities from almost day one. ALA has a very welcoming group of members—everyone that I have come in contact with has offered help to me in any way that he/she could. As I said earlier, I used to be a member years ago and members of the organization weren't nearly as ready and willing to help as they are today.

**Jonathan:** I feel as if our membership has been extremely beneficial in understanding the workings of smaller and mid- size law firms.

**Tom:** MOST DEFINITELY! I have made so many good friends from our association. The Chap-

ter is such an excellent learning forum and has provided me with excellent networking opportunities. Every firm has almost the same types of problems. If you have an issue or question, you can ask on our discussion board and get 10 answers in a matter of minutes. In addition, it has been great working with our business partners. I feel that I have made lifelong friends thanks to the ALA.

**Kevin:** Konica Minolta's sponsorship has been tremendously beneficial in many ways. First, as I stated earlier, we are better able to understand the inner-workings of law firms in general and those we interact with in particular. Then, we are given opportunities to have frequent face-to-face interaction with decision-makers and decision-influencers. This allows us to develop relationships and discuss what we can offer and how we can help and/or benefit the firm. Twenty (20) years

*(Continued on page 32)*

## THE MALE PERSPECTIVE ON ALA (CONT'D)

later, we are a top-tier business partner in NYC, sponsor the national chapter, and support just about every local and regional chapter. Our experience has been an extremely positive one and we feel strongly that our relationship with the ALA has been mutually beneficial. We look forward to continuing our sponsorship long into the future.

**Prior to joining the Chapter, were you aware that it was composed predominantly of females?**

**Henry:** Yes.

**Richard:** Yes, I was.

**Jonathan:** No, I was not.

**Tom:** Yes.

**Kevin:** Actually no.

**What do you believe are the pros and cons of working with a majority female group?**

**Henry:** I found all members helpful and easy to work with. However, I think diversity is important.

**Richard:** I don't think that it is either. Everyone is extremely professional. At the end of the day, that's all you can ask for.

**Jonathan:** No different than working in any other Member/BP context. For example, SHRM. If you have a healthy respect in both directions it's a win-win!

**Tom:** I find that it has been a pleasure working with our chapter. Everyone has been so friendly and always willing to help. It seems I have continuously worked with a majority of females on my staff so the fact that the ALA

***“I have made so many good friends from our association. The Chapter is such an excellent learning forum and has provided me with excellent networking opportunities.”***

**—Tom**

was mostly a female group was not an issue at all. In fact, it's been a pleasure.

**Kevin:** I honestly don't see pros or cons. Many of my earliest influences have been women and my wife, mother, mother-in-law and VP are all women. I spend a lot of time with members of the opposite sex. If I could offer an observation that I believe is applicable, it is that women appear to be far more organized and attentive to detail than the men I work with. I believe this is just one of many reasons why so many law firms trust women to run their businesses. This could also explain

*(Continued on page 33)*

## THE MALE PERSPECTIVE ON ALA (CONT'D)

how the ALA operates so proficiently and effectively. Despite having full-time jobs in a high-pressure industry and often with families at home who also rely on them, women members are able to find the time to get involved in so many aspects of the organization and make it the special and highly-regarded chapter it truly is.

### ***How do you feel about being in the statistical minority of the membership?***

**Henry:** I like diversity and hoped more male members would be encouraged to get involved. This should be an initiative.

**Richard:** I don't really feel like it means anything.

**Jonathan:** Never really think about it, frankly. The staffing industry and related customers tend to skew toward female majority. Seems natural for me.

**Tom:** Not a problem at all. In fact, I enjoy it. I would encourage more men to join and see for themselves, the value of the organization. I always enjoy speaking to new members to let them know all the benefits you can derive from being in such a wonderful organization.

**Kevin:** Being a statistical minority within the ALA has never been an issue and not something I ever really had to think about. After 20+ years in business, I tend to have close relationships with all sorts of people from all walks of life. A person's sex, religion, race, etc. is not something I ever needed to navigate around. I have simply been respectful of all groups and accepting of things that make all of us unique as individuals. People

are people and our differences should be celebrated as intensely as the things we have in common.

***Thank you Henry, Richard, Tom, Jon and Kevin for your insightful feedback!***

***“Great networking, immediate resources, life time friends and relationships.”***  
***—Henry***



## BODY SHAMING BIAS

GINA NEGRIN

**B**ody shaming is defined as the action or practice of humiliating someone by making mocking comments about their body shape or size. This is mostly evident when it comes to an individual's weight.

With the increasing number of discrimination cases being brought forward on sexual harassment and the #MeToo movement, body shaming and beauty bias are gaining national attention. Body shaming has and continues to permeate individuals' lives from early education through college and, later when they become adults, in their personal lives and careers. In one national poll, 16% of workers reported that they had been subject to such biases, a percentage that is slightly greater than those reporting gender or racial prejudice (12%). The reasons against body shaming are straightforward since discrimination compromises principles of individual dignity and equal opportunity to the same extent as other forms of bias that are now illegal and upheld.<sup>1</sup>

Currently, Michigan state and several municipalities have passed laws to protect people from body shaming. However, in most states, there are no laws that prohibit employers from this type of behavior which allows an individual to be terminated when they are perceived as being overweight. Body shaming is a per-



vasive issue with measurable effects on people's lives, from insults to difficulty securing healthcare, and pay discrepancies. However, there have been recent developments that indicate body shaming may violate the Americans With Disabilities Act ("ADA") if the employee's weight substantially impairs a major life activity. But there are limitations to classifying an overweight person with a disability, and the physical impairment must be outside the normal range (not just being "overweight"). Since obesity may result in a physiological disorder or a medical condition such as diabetes or hypertension, it may be considered a disabling condition as per the ADA.

Recent cases relying on the ADA claims included a 5'3", 230-pound employee who sued under the ADA, claiming that she was fired for being morbidly obese. The Alabama court held that "a plaintiff's status as being overweight, without more, has been

held **not** to constitute a disability within the meaning of the statute. ... [s]o the critical question for purposes of assessing whether [plaintiff] is 'disabled' for ADA's purpose is whether her obesity substantially limits one or more of her major life activities. It also bars employers from treating someone as having a disability when the overweight individual is not disabled and can do the job. Another case brought in a Kentucky court by an employee, who at 5'4" tall, weighing 425 pounds, and suffering from diabetes, claimed that she was fired due to her "personal appearance." Here, the appeals court decided that she suffered from morbid obesity, which it defined as "a person's weighing either double his normal weight or at least one-hundred pounds more than his normal weight," but ruled that "merely being overweight is not a disability—absent more."<sup>2</sup> Adding to another movement made by the American Medical Association, which declared

*(Continued on page 35)*

## BODY SHAMING BIAS (CONT'D)

GINA NEGRIN

obesity a disease, one doctor said that “[r]ecognizing obesity as a disease will help change the way the medical community tackles this complex issue that affects approximately 1 in 3.”<sup>3</sup>

How will these cases and others now in front of the court help change and allow for equal footing in the workplace for individuals who are considered overweight? How will managers and leaders alike take on this issue? For starters, just recently the National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance (NAAFA) reported that Michigan State is the first state with laws prohibiting discrimination against overweight people, enacted since 1977. The law prohibits discrimination practices based on 10 categories, including weight.<sup>4</sup> In addition, several cities and municipalities have also enacted laws to prevent body shaming, including the following:

- Binghamton, NY: the municipal code on discrimination includes “height, weight, or physical characteristics” as protected categories.
- Washington, DC: The Human Rights Law includes “personal appearance” in its protected categories.
- San Francisco, CA: The Human Rights Commission added “weight and height” to the mu-

nicipal code to ensure that programs, services, and facilities would be accessible.<sup>5</sup>

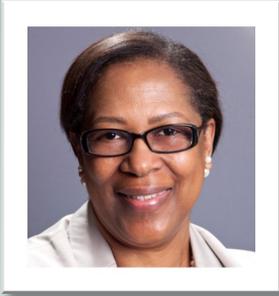
Also noted for the wave of change is Israel’s Knesset<sup>6</sup> which introduced this past year three bills that would protect overweight people from discrimination. One bill, an amendment to the Prohibition of Discrimination in Goods or Services Law, would prohibit denying commercial services to someone on the basis of their weight. An amendment to the Defamation Law would empower overweight people to sue those who insult or exclude them because of their weight. Another amendment, to the Equality and Opportunity in Work Law, would add weight to the list of items that may not be used to discriminate against potential employees.<sup>7</sup>

It is evident that interest in enacting new laws to protect against body shaming will continue to increase in the future. In an effort to make the public aware of body shaming bias and the subsequent issues associated with it, this is a great time to consider incorporating this topic as part of diversity training in the workplace. Bringing awareness about body shaming and the detrimental effects it has on an individual’s well-being would serve as a reminder of the need for an inclusive environment. After all, “good things can come in many shapes and sizes”.

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Gina Negrin  
Legal Administrative Assistant  
*Grais & Ellsworth LLP*

1. <https://newrepublic.com/article/118683/why-we-need-law-protect-against-appearance-discrimination>
2. <http://caselaw.findlaw.com/ky-court-of-appeals/1638490.html>
3. <http://articles.latimes.com/2013/jun/18/science/la-sci-obesity-disease-20130619>
4. [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/act\\_453\\_elliott\\_larsen\\_8772\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/act_453_elliott_larsen_8772_7.pdf)
5. <https://www.naafaonline.com/dev2/education/laws.htm>
6. [https://www.google.com/search?rlz=1C1GCEA\\_enUS751US751&nfpr=1&q=what+is+israel%27s+Knesset&spell=1&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwii7NHApMHYAhWBUN8KHJYDCsQBQgkKAA&biw=1096&bih=933](https://www.google.com/search?rlz=1C1GCEA_enUS751US751&nfpr=1&q=what+is+israel%27s+Knesset&spell=1&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwii7NHApMHYAhWBUN8KHJYDCsQBQgkKAA&biw=1096&bih=933)
7. <https://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4844686,00.html>



## DID YOU KNOW...?

JENNIFFER A. BROWN

**H**ave you ever wondered why world cultures have so many distinguishing and unique customs? Imagine if we all dressed alike, spoke the same language, ate the same cuisine, listened to the same music and shared the same traditions. We would be a homogenous people, void of these individualistic characteristics that make each of us so unique. Aside from our various skin tones, bone structure, lip size, hair textures, here are some interesting practices that set cultures apart:

### The Hijab



A hijab is a veil worn by Muslim women as a symbol of modesty and privacy. It is worn in the presence of males who are not immediate family members (those close connections whom they could not marry). It also encourages men to respect a woman's modesty and rights, and to become interested in her because of her mind instead of her body. Depending on the Muslim country and per-

sonal preference, there are different styles of hijabs worn by Muslim women, e.g., the burqa, which covers the entire body and face, as well as headscarves, turbans, and other covering fabrics.

Wearing hijab in public is now required by law or religion in several Muslim countries and banned in others. However, some women choose to wear them for social or personal reasons. The Quran further commands Muslim men to not lustfully look at women (other than their own wives); and in order to prevent any possibility of temptation, they are required to cast their glances downwards. This is known as "*hijab* of the eyes".

### The Bindi



A bindi is a very distinct red dot that symbolizes aspects of Hindu culture and is worn by mainly Hindi women but can also be worn by men. Depending on who wears it, the bindi means different things – men wear a bindi to signify religious affiliation, while women wear it to represent their status as married women. For Hindus, the bindi also signifies the third eye that they believe can ward off bad luck. A bindi is worn mainly in south Asian countries like India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Mauritius.

(Continued on page 37)

## DID YOU KNOW...? (CONT'D)

JENNIFFER A. BROWN

### African Headwraps



The headwrap originated in sub-Saharan Africa and is used to show spirituality, modesty and prosperity. The style of the headwrap denotes the woman's country of origin, her marital status and/or her maternal status. Women wear a headwrap as a matter of practicality to protect their heads from the sun, but Africans overall use this headwrap to underscore their life and social status. In the Americas, it is a symbol of survival, courage and embracing one's cultural heritage.

### Payot

*(pronounced payes)*



The payot are the sidecurls or sidelocks worn by some Orthodox Jewish boys and men in accordance with the Biblical order against shaving the corners of one's head,

meaning the hair between the ears and temple. Different Jewish groups wear different styles of payot, e.g., the Belz Hasidism wrap their sidelocks around their ears as many times as necessary rather than trim them, while Lithuanian Jews cut their sidelocks leaving only a few strands, which they sometimes remove after their sideburns grow in. These are only two examples but there are several variations. The long payot of some groups is assumed to be an enhancement of the basic obligation to have payots. Growing the payot is one of the several commandments that Orthodox Jewish males follow in order to maintain a physical appearance that distinguishes them from idol worshippers, as directed by the Torah.

### The Sheitel

*(pronounced shy-tel)*



The sheitel is a wig that is worn by some married Orthodox Jewish women as an outward symbol of obedience to God and to adhere to modesty standards in Jewish law. The brain, which is behind the hair, is a woman's source of vitality. Therefore the wearing of the sheitel is their way of bringing Godliness into all aspects of life. Ultimately, the wearing of the sheitel is about creating protection and reframing the woman's role in her family. It is also believed that hair on a married woman is naked-

*(Continued on page 38)*

## DID YOU KNOW...? (CONT'D)

JENNIFFER A. BROWN

ness, and should be covered. Some Hasidic groups prefer to wear colorful or patterned tichels (large headscarves covering the whole head) or hats rather than sheitels, to avoid giving the impression of uncovered hair. Many choose to observe variations of this custom for religious, traditional or personal reasons, e.g., some sects believe women should shave their own hair and only wear the Sheitel. However, only a small group of Hassidic women follow this practice. Sheitels are often brought to a stylist for regular maintenance - washing, drying, and curling/blow drying. Just like secular women, there is a natural desire to avoid looking unattractive and obedience to religious beliefs is supposed to be done with joy. Ultimately, wearing a sheitel is a way to find a deeper connection with the creator.

### Dreadlocks



The significance of wearing dreadlocks is grounded in spirituality according to the origins of mankind. Dreadlocks are synonymous with the Rastafari lifestyle that is a non-conforming, free-thinking, culturally inclusive, highly spiritual and naturalistic way of living. Rastafarianism was born in Jamaica and one of the most important tenets of Rastafarianism is to not alter the natural state of one's facial, body and head hair. So one takes a Nazirite vow to not trim, cut, shave nor comb one's hair and live a clean life which includes observing strict dietary rules and shunning vanity. Sometimes they're covered

by a turban, or tam, which is usually referred to as a "Crown".

Nowadays, dreadlocks have become a symbol of the African roots and culture. Dreadlocks, however, are not unique to Jamaican Rastafari as "locks" - meaning the natural state of one's hair - which have been worn by the Yogis in India, Egyptians and the Masai tribesmen of Kenya, in their quest for a divine connection. Dreadlocks have been worn by several cultures over the course of time.

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Jennifer A. Brown

Firm Administrator

Weiner Millo Morgan & Bonanno LLC

### Resources and Credits:

[www.chabad.org](http://www.chabad.org)

Jill Schissel, CLM, ALANYC member (sheitel, payot)

Anna Scarpa, ALANYC member (sheitel, payot)

Rabbi Ezra Schwartz (sheitel, payot)

Elorde Brown (dreadlocks)

Sara Hekal (hijab)

Debra Profio, Esq. (sheitel)

### Disclaimer

*The information provided herein is not meant to provide finite definitions of any of these practices. Interpretations may differ depending on religious groups or sects to which one belongs, communities within which we live and houses of worship. In our research for this article, we discovered that opinions are influenced greatly by these factors. With this knowledge, the Diversity and Inclusion Committee of ALA New York City Chapter and the writer, Jennifer Brown, express regret for any misinformation provided in the article.*



## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A WORKING MOTHER

NADIA WAGNER

If, like me, you are a working mother, then you certainly understand the trials and tribulations of juggling home and career. I have raised three boys to (almost) full adulthood and recall how difficult it was through the early years. In addition to managing a full-time job and long commute, I had another full-time job awaiting me at the end of each day – that of chef, laundress, dishwasher, teacher, etc. I recall falling into bed each night completely exhausted only to get up early the next morning and do it all over again. On top of the hectic cycle, I had to deal with a rotating array of babysitters, each one less reliable than the last. It was a very stressful period and sometimes it is hard to imagine how I lived through it. Each phase of maturity presented its own challenges as the toddler years gave way to the middle school years of homework, assignments, science projects and team sports. Uniforms had to be ready for each game and each practice, which meant laundry was a non-stop activity. And you always had to have extra supplies on-hand for those last-minute school projects. Nothing worse than running out of glue or oak tag paper late at night!

I recall a time when ALL THREE of my children caught nasty viruses at the same time. Throughout the entire day and night, I nursed each of them through the classic virus symptoms. When they're sick, we all know they only want MOM! When one slept, another awoke and so on through the whole night. At the break of dawn when they were all finally peacefully sleeping, I had to shower, get dressed and run to work since I had an important meeting that day. Thanks to a continuous supply of caffeine, I made it through the day and my meeting. Needless to say, I went right to bed as soon as I got home. (Thankfully, my kids were feeling better!)

I know we have many working mothers in our organiza-

tion and I asked a few of them to share some of their stories about work/life balance. It provides a brief insight into the life of a working mom. Hats off to all the working moms out there (especially the single ones who are doing this all on their own) and to all the working dads (like my own husband) who provide incredible support. You are superstars! I know that like me, you believe it is all worth it.



*My three angels, Cameron, Brandon and Dylan Wagner, Christmas 2003*

### **A Note From Nellie Lefteratos:**

As a child of immigrant parents, I always wanted to “live the American Life” i.e., Donna Reed reading bedtime stories to me, big house with a white picket fence and Lassie lying by my bedside. I kept insisting that my parents only speak English. I was embarrassed and ashamed of my Hispanic heritage. I wanted to be so American that I didn't appreciate the culture and foundation that my parents built for me.

Looking back and knowing what I know today, I was foolish not to embrace my culture and appreciate the life that

*(Continued on page 40)*

## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A WORKING MOTHER (CONT'D)

NADIA WAGNER

I had. Although it wasn't perfect (we didn't have the house with the white picket fence) it was a home full of real emotions, ups and downs, tears and joy. My mother was a stay-at-home mom who was devoted and loving to her family and her community. She made sure that we always had everything we needed without any compromises.



**Kamille, Nellie and Alex Lefteratos**

I try to emulate the same values for my family, but balancing home and work can have its challenges. At times I felt overwhelmed and guilty for not always being available to my family. However, thanks to the love and support of my amazing husband, my burdens were lightened. Because of him, I was able to balance both a career and home life. It set the tone for a harmonious household whereby my children always had one of us available to them. How fortunate I was to be able to enjoy my career and at the same time be a loving and de-

voted wife and mother. I could not be more blessed than I am today.

Family is so important but I didn't realize it until I had my own children. My mother use to say, "Espera hasta que tengas tus propios hijos y verás lo que quiero decir con el amor de una madre". Translation: "Wait until you have your own children and you see what I mean by a mother's love". I couldn't agree more.

### **A Note From Debra Crandon:**

When I think of the words "Motherhood and Work" in today's society, I cringe because it is difficult to juggle both and not beat yourself up. Many times, I have stopped and asked myself how my mother, a dominant woman, managed raising her 9 brothers and 5 children while working a full-time job. I cannot recall ever feeling unloved or neglected by my mother. She always managed to have order in our home. She cooked, cleaned, grocery shopped, visited our schools, volunteered at our school, took us to our doctor's appointments and was always available. Yes, I had uncles and cousins present to assist, but my mother did it all. She was a caring, hard-working, fearless, supportive, loving, beautiful, and



**Debra and her beautiful family**

*(Continued on page 41)*

## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A WORKING MOTHER (CONT'D)

NADIA WAGNER

strong woman, sort of “A WONDER WOMAN!”

When I became a mother, I aspired to be all my mother was to her siblings and children. Little did I understand the challenges of managing the expectations of motherhood and a job would be a full-time job in itself. I have been blessed with 3 beautiful, bright children and a supportive husband. When my kids were younger, I used to beat myself up when I missed their “first of any new event” because of “month-ends” and “the beginnings of the month.” I became good at reciting *Good Night Moon*, *I Love You*, *Run Away Bunny*, *The Little Engine That Could* and many more stories spoken to them over the phone. Society forces us to choose what should come first, our children or our jobs. As a mother, you question your actions and the impact it may have on your children now and in the future. Are your responsibilities aligned with what is considered right? Are you spending “quality time” with your children? The balancing act is tiresome. Having the support of your loved ones while you are working and wonderful children who think the world of you is truly awesome. My children write me little notes expressing their gratitude. I am called “Mama Bear” which is a hat I wear proudly. I think but do not languish on the “What If’s”?

I am thankful and appreciative for my husband who selflessly allows me to be me. My friends and families who have pitched in and assisted me along the way. I have learned to embrace the term “it takes a village to raise a child”. I could not have managed my household and work full time, as my mother did, in a demanding job without the support of my husband, family and friends. I raise my hat to all the mothers facing the daunting challenges of both and making it work. I am blessed!

### **A Note From Francine Lahm:**

Someone once said, “how much is a word worth?” I quote these words because while in the midst of my legal administration career, my middle daughter, Danielle, was diagnosed with severe autism at 19 months. To me and my family, one word was priceless.

Working full time, commuting from New Jersey to the City and having the immense responsibility of providing



**Fran with her three daughters**



**HS Graduate, Danielle**

for my family, once again this working woman had to step up to the plate. Lucky to have an incredibly supportive spouse, my husband quit his job and managed the intense behavioral and other therapies my daughter so desperately needed. In order not to miss the very detailed intricacies of the weekly analyses provided by our therapeutic team, my sleep was reduced from approximately six or seven hours a night to approximately four or five, as I watched recorded video

*(Continued on page 42)*

## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A WORKING MOTHER (CONT'D)

NADIA WAGNER

(yes, VHS!) of the forty hours of class she had each week. It was vital that everyone on the team keep up with what we needed to do, (or more importantly, not do.)

Working full-time, balancing (not sure work and personal life is ever quite in balance!) raising two children (at the time – for those who do not know me well, I now have a third daughter, Olivia, who is 11 years old) one with special needs, was especially trying. There were many times I felt like giving up and that something had to give. Well, give we did, and give and give...

I am thrilled to say that not only did my daughter recover from her severe autistic state, she has been accepted to five colleges and was just inducted into the National Honor Society!

I love my family and I love to work – I get to do both – how fortunate am I?

### **A Note from Santa Medina:**

My experience in juggling work and motherhood was a balancing act to say the least. As I raised my two children, now adults, it seemed like a never-ending cycle of preparing food, feeding, bathing, dressing and changing, dropping off, picking up. As they grew into school age we then added checking homework and assignments, play dates, birthday parties, school trips extra-curricular activities - all activities that were done while maintaining a full-time job.

After leaving my children with a babysitter, daycare or school, my other responsibilities and role began. A full-time Office Manager with staff to oversee and manage, finances and reports to complete daily and computer systems to maintain, I found myself in a constant race against the clock. If I wasn't trying to make a bus, ferry or train to get to work on time in the mornings, I was desperately trying to make all commuting connections to pick up the children at the babysitter (who had her own family plans), or running to a daycare facility before they closed or calling my backup child care to be sure my babies were in a safe place until my return.

One evening on a rare car ride home, my husband and I got a flat tire on the highway. I had no cell phone or laptop to contact my backup child care. I was frantic to think that the daycare would not find someone on my list to pick up my baby before closing for the evening. My palms were sweaty and my heart was pounding with panic as we flagged down a tow truck. We explained our childcare dilemma to the tow truck driver and, without hesitation, he not only loaded our car and drove it to a shop near our home, but he also drove us to the daycare facility in time to pick up our baby. It was comforting to know that there are still nice people in the world who would go out of their way to help others. Not a story I can easily forget. That evening as I laid my baby to sleep all I could think of was how do we do this? I do know that we sometimes find the strength from those little smiles and hugs as they grow and the special times when our children call upon us for advice on life. Motherhood, I would not change a thing.



*Santa and her children*

### **A Note from Tanya Duprey:**

I think the most common question or "observation" I hear is "How do you do it?" To which I don't really have an

*(Continued on page 43)*

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## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A WORKING MOTHER (CONT'D)

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NADIA WAGNER

answer and usually just smile or laugh and give a wink. Here's my "it": I manage a 120+ person law firm; I'm mom to two amazing but challenging girls – my 9-year-old who has learning differences and who sees any number of specialists, tutors and therapists and my 6-year-old who is equal parts fire and sass; I'm currently serving as President of our fabulous 340-member chapter; I advocate for family choice in education aka Charter Schools; and I'm also wife to a wonderful, if not often neglected, husband of 18 years who is usually simply referred to as "Mr. Matos".

As I sat down to write this I asked myself, how do I do this?! At first I thought – by not sleeping, ever! But, that's not really it. I do it through a village of people that have surrounded me to help me every day. From my friends, to family, in-laws, co-workers, the 20 or so mommy Facebook groups I'm in, teachers, fellow parents and the amazing board members I serve with, this is how I do it. Although I am terrible at asking for help, I rarely ever have to because I am fortunate to have people in my life that see me and reach out to help. I just have to be humble enough to accept it. Which I have learned to do, a lot!

My days largely consist of running dizzily from meeting to meeting, deadline to deadline, school show to doctor's appointment, desperately trying to stay on top of every commitment while being present for those who need me the most. Creating spreadsheets of to-do's, docketing everything I can remember and periodically stopping to think ahead, just for a minute, of where I need to be and figuring out how to get there. Some moments that's literally thinking about which way to walk on the sidewalk and other times it's about my goals in life. I just keep asking myself, where do I need to be? This admittedly makes it hard to enjoy where I am right now, but I'm Type A so, it comes with the territory.

As I thought more about this topic the question became not how do I do this, but why? Well, it's because I love my girls. My girls are my magic. They are my fire. They are why I work so hard and fight to achieve so much. If



*The Duprey Family*

it's my job to be their role model, I am going to push that bar as high as I can. So be on the lookout for my kiddos who will be attending our Attorney Luncheon this year to see their mommy in action. I want them to understand why education is so important, not just in school but always, and I want them to see that when you are passionate about something, you don't wait for someone else to do it, you go out and give of yourself to get it done. I want them to understand and appreciate service in the name of something you deeply believe in. Finally, I want them to see what a strong Latina from The Bronx can achieve no matter the obstacles.

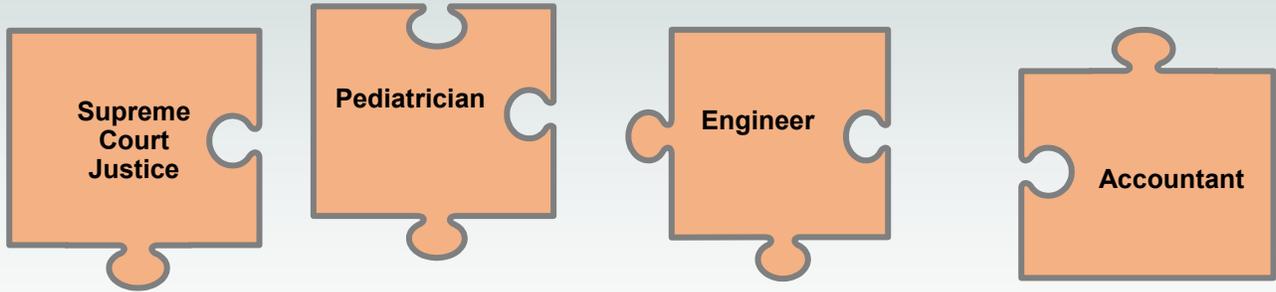
So "how do I do it"? Dedication, passion, humility, help from others and pure exhaustion. Gotta run.

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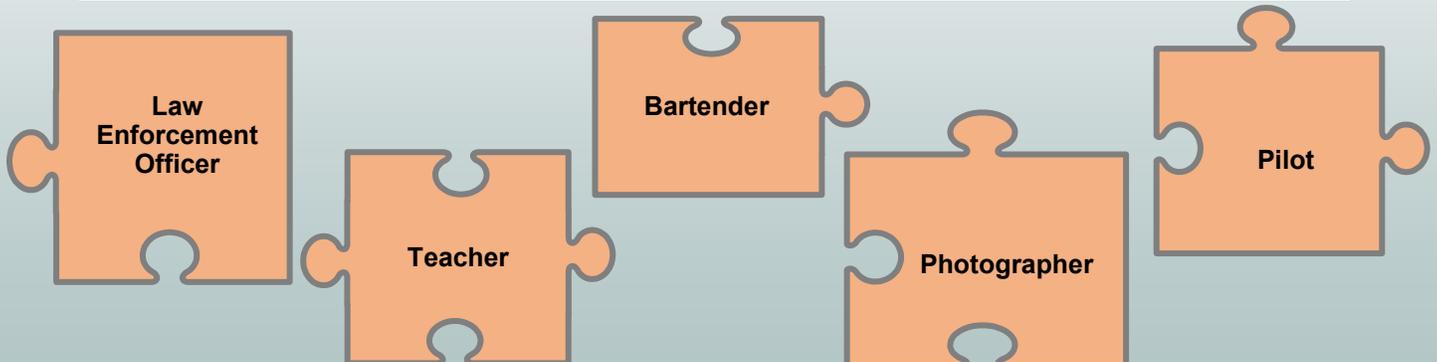
Nadia Wagner  
Office Manager  
*Beveridge & Diamond, P.C.*

## WOMEN AND PROFESSIONS PUZZLE

(For an interactive online version of this puzzle (where you can click and drag the puzzle pieces over the tiles), click [HERE](#). Answers to the puzzle are on page 46.)



<p>To date, there are only 113 people that ever held this high position. Of those, 109 (96.5%) are males. The first female was appointed to this post in 1981.</p>	<p>For this profession, you need strong math and science knowledge, which may be applied in a multitude of ways in day-to-day life. Currently women comprise only 14% of this profession. However, that number has grown from 5% since the 1980s.</p>	<p>Women comprise approximately 13% of the workforce in this profession. While this is a vast improvement from 2% in the 1970s, today women still face rank advancement limitations, called "brass ceiling".</p>
<p>For this job you need patience, a love of children and a degree from medical school. Currently, this profession is being dominated by women, with approximately 60% of specialists being female.</p>	<p>This profession has been dominated by women since the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Even though it requires higher education, a lot of knowledge, patience and is considered one of the most important roles in the formation of a human being, the initial thought behind allowing women to enter the profession in the 1840s was simple economics – women's salaries were 1/3 that of their male counterparts .</p>	<p>You need a creative mind, an eye for special moments and a heart of an artist for this profession. Today, the gender distribution in this profession is 50/50. However, that is a significant rise from 1983 at which time women only comprised 23% of the professionals in this category.</p>
<p>Women took over this profession when men were drafted in World War II. Currently, about 60% of people in this job are female.</p>	<p>Women have been widely involved in this industry, however, today women comprise only 6% of this occupation. Despite this fact, women have been pioneering this industry since the beginning, with the first women to be hired into the commercial branch in 1934.</p>	<p>This profession requires extreme precision, knowledge of math and love of numbers. Women have been dominating this profession for more than three decades, currently leading the industry with an impressive 86%.</p>



**D**ifferences are strengths

**I**nspiration comes in many forms

**V**alue uniqueness

**E**ngage in discussion

**R**aise your voice for those outside the circle

**S**ee the world from a different lens

**I**dentify what makes you uncomfortable

**T**urn your focus on the bigger picture

**Y**ou gain more when you know more



For more information, contact ALANYC Diversity & Inclusion Committee @ [www.alanyc.org](http://www.alanyc.org)

**January** [Celebrating Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.](#)

**February** [African American History Month](#)

**March** [Women's History Month](#)  
[Irish-American Heritage Month](#)

**April** [Arab American Heritage Month](#)

**May** [Asian Pacific American Heritage](#)  
[Older Americans Month](#)  
[Jewish American Heritage Month](#)

**June** [LGBTQ Pride Month](#)

**July** [Happy Independence America!](#)

**August** [The Ever-Changing Workforce – Generations](#)

**September** [Hispanic Heritage Month](#)

**October** [Disability Employment Awareness Month](#)  
[Italian American Heritage Month](#)

**November** [American Indian Heritage Month](#)

**December** [Universal Human Rights Month](#)



## WOMEN AND PROFESSIONS PUZZLE: ANSWERS

To date, there are only 113 people that ever held this high position. Of those, 109 (96.5%) are males. The first female was appointed to this post in 1981. [Answer: Supreme Court Justice]

For this profession, you need strong math and science knowledge, which may be applied in a multitude of ways in day-do-day life. Currently women comprise only 14% of this profession. However, that number has grown from 5% since the 1980s. [Answer: Engineer]

Women comprise approximately 13% of the workforce in this profession. While this is a vast improvement from 2% in the 1970s, today women still face rank advancement limitations, called “brass ceiling”. [Answer: Law Enforcement Officer]

For this job, you need patience, a love of children and a degree from medical school. Currently, this profession is being dominated by women, with approximately 60% of specialists being female. [Answer: Pediatrician]

This profession has been dominated by women since the turn of the 20th century. Even though it requires higher education, a lot of knowledge, patience and is considered one of the most important roles in the formation of a human being, the initial thought behind allowing women to enter the profession in the 1840s was simple economics – women’s salaries were 1/3 that of their male counterparts. [Answer: Teacher]

You need a creative mind, an eye for special moments and a heart of an artist for this profession. Today, the gender distribution in this profession is 50/50. However, that is a significant rise from 1983 at which time women only comprised 23% of the professionals in this category. [Answer: Photographer]

Women took over this profession when men were drafted in World War II. Currently, about 60% of people in this job are female. [Answer: Bartender]

Women have been widely involved in this industry, however, today women comprise only 6% of this occupation. Despite this fact, women have been pioneering this industry since the beginning, with the first women to be hired into the commercial branch in 1934. [Answer: Pilot]

This profession requires extreme precision, knowledge of math and a love of numbers. Women have been dominating this profession for more than three decades, currently leading the industry with an impressive 86%. [Answer: Accountant]

# THANK YOU!

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## Our Event Presenters During the 2017-2018 Term

**Kisha C. Nunez**, Associate Director of Recruiting and Diversity, *Wachtell, Lipton Rosen & Katz*  
(Intersectionality Presentation)

**Anthony Consiglio, Esq.**, *Cary Kane LLP* (Gender Identity Presentation)

**Katherine Greenberg**, Assistant Commissioner, Law Enforcement Bureau, *NYC Commission on Human Rights*  
(Gender Identity Presentation)

**Tamanna Rubya, Esq.**, Law Enforcement Bureau, *NYC Commission on Human Rights* (Ageism Presentation)

**Eric Hausman**, Independent Consultant, *DFTA* (Medicare Presentation)

**Ellie Krug, Esq.**, Founder and President, *Human Inspiration Works LLC* (“Gray Area Thinking” Presentation)

**Everett Lo**, Social Security Administrator (Social Security Presentation)

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**NEW YORK CITY CHAPTER**

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