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ON THE COVER

We usually think of age, gender, nationality, race, and sexual orientation when considering diversity and inclusion. As you read in the following pages, you will see that successful law firms also capitalize on the many differing philosophies, disabilities, and cultures that we encounter in our world.

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WHO HAS AN I.D.E.A.?

BY MARY ELLEN DOLAN

As some of you may know, ALA is no longer participating in the Chapter Awards Program, except for the President's Award of Excellence. Gone are the days of rushing to complete awards submissions to compete against other chapters. While the annual Awards Program always brought some good, fun competition, ALA has decided it was time for our organization to move in a new direction.

Earlier this year, at the Chapter Leadership Conference ("CLI"), ALA announced the kick-off the new program; ALA IDEA Awards. The acronym stands for Innovation, Development, Engagement, and Advancement. ALA chapters, committees, regions, individuals, firms, business partners, and organizations are eligible to compete for awards, and winners will be selected based upon their development of unique and innovative programs, services, and events that improve our firms, ALA chapters and/or legal communities. As leaders in the business of law, we are being asked to "think outside the box." We can present ideas that would directly benefit our Chapter or all Chapters. An example would be developing an innovative membership program to recruit new members to ALA. Chapters can submit for more than one IDEA Award each year. Below is a list of areas of competition, but this list is certainly only a sampling of the endless areas where innovative ideas can truly make a difference.

- Alternative Fee Arrangements
- Lateral Hiring and Retention
- Bar Relations
- Leadership
- Business Partner Relations
- Legal Project Management
- CLM Related Activities
- Space Planning and Usage
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Technology
- Green Initiatives
- Visibility

As NJALA President, I am asking each of you to think of IDEAs that we as a chapter can submit to ALA for new programs and practices that will deliver great value and transformational impact throughout our firms and the Legal Community as a whole. Now is your chance to help develop programs that you always thought might work but you never knew how to get the ball rolling. The possibilities are endless.

If there are any IDEAs you would like to submit, please e-mail me at dolanm@gtlaw.com. Entries will be reviewed by a panel of judges and the winners will be announced at the Annual Conference in Toronto.

Mary Ellen Dolan is the Office Administrator of Greenberg Traurig, LLP in Florham Park





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BEST PRACTICES: TRUST ACCOUNTING

BY KENNETH E. WINSLOW

It is the duty of all New Jersey attorneys to safeguard client funds and property under their control in the practice of law. Client assets must be kept separate from the attorney's personal and business assets, and cannot be used for any purpose whatsoever, other than as directed by the client.

The attorney is specifically obligated to notify a client promptly when client funds and property is received; to provide the client with appropriate accountings; and to disburse promptly to the client all funds and property to which the client is entitled. Non-cash property, such as bonds and securities, should be clearly identified as client property and secured in the attorney's safe or safe deposit box.

The best practices and comments list below are meant to address some of the more common recordkeeping deficiencies and to help you maintain trust account documentation, in accordance with the requirements of the Supreme Court of New Jersey.

Bank Accounts

Attorneys are prohibited from comingling operating funds with client trust funds. All attorneys who engage in private practice of law in New Jersey are required to maintain at least two attorney bank accounts with proper designations on the statements, check, and deposit slips, as follows:

1. Client trust fund account containing the designation "Attorney Trust Account"
2. Business operating account containing the designation "Attorney Business Account"

Trust Accounts

The attorney trust account must be maintained at a financial institution or branch, located in the State of New Jersey.

1. The financial institutions must be approved by the Supreme Court of New Jersey. An approved financial institution list is published annually;
2. The account must have a prominent designation "Attorney Trust Account" on all statements, checks, and deposit slips;
3. Only attorneys admitted to practice in the State of New

Jersey, are permitted to sign trust account disbursement checks and wire transfer authorizations;

4. The attorney trust account should not be used for funds which an attorney receives while acting in any fiduciary capacity, such as executor, guardian, receiver, or trustee. These funds are to be placed in separate fiduciary accounts.

Recordkeeping

The following are specific recordkeeping practices to help you avoid common pitfalls. Work with your CPA professional to set up a system to comply with New Jersey guidelines:

1. There must be supporting documents to show that, at least monthly, a reconciliation has been made of the cash balance derived from cash receipts and cash disbursement journal totals, the checkbook balance, the bank statement balance, and the client trust ledger;
2. All trust transaction journals must contain sufficient descriptions including the client's last name and identifying file or matter number;
3. The accounting system must produce a separate client trust ledger, providing sufficient information regarding the case and matter, indicating the source of all deposits, names of all persons for whom the funds are held and the description, and name and amounts for all funds disbursed from the trust account;
4. All trust account withdrawals must be made only by attorney authorized financial institution transfers or by checks payable to the named payee (and not to cash);
5. All electronic transfers out of an attorney trust account shall be made on signed written instructions from an authorized attorney to the financial institution. The financial institution must confirm each authorized transfer by returning a document to the attorney showing the date of transfer, the payee, and the amount;
6. Copies of cancelled check digital images that are provided with the monthly bank statement must be no more than two (2) images per page.

Unidentified and Unclaimed Trust Accumulations

Attorneys must refund unearned legal fees or unspent advanced costs. Attorneys have an ethical responsibility to

(Continued on page 7)

Best Practices

(Continued from page 6)

do so whenever the attorney completes or withdraws from representation or the attorney is discharged by the client.

1. Account balances that are either unidentified or unclaimed for a period exceeding two years or which are held for missing owners shall be designated as “Unidentified and Unclaimed Trust Fund Accumulations”;
2. The attorney must make a reasonable search to locate the beneficial owner of the funds, as designated above, for a subsequent one year period;
3. After the one year period the unclaimed funds should be paid to the Clerk of the Superior Court with an application that includes a detailed affidavit providing the facts and all reasonable efforts of search, inquiry, and notice;
4. The Clerk of the Superior Court may decline to accept funds where the petition does not evidence a diligent search.

Records Retention

All New Jersey Attorneys are mandated to retain the following records for at least seven years:

1. Client retainer and fee arrangements;
2. Statements provided to clients showing disbursements of funds;
3. Billings rendered to clients, and;
4. Records showing payments to other attorneys or non-employees for services rendered.

In addition to the best practices outlined above please refer to the record keeping requirements published by the Supreme Court of New Jersey under RPC 1.15 and R.1:21-6.

You may also access information online at <http://www.judiciary.state.nj.us/oe>.

*Kenneth Winslow is a Partner at
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CURRENT TRENDS IN LEGAL WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENTS

BY TRACY NAGEL

The legal industry has seen significant change of its workplace environments and trends in just the last ten years. In our experience, understanding these changes is the key to maximizing any office space.

Many business factors are continuing to influence the change in legal workspace environments:

- Impact of the economic downturn on hiring and caseload
- Downward fee pressure and alternate fee arrangements
- Outsourcing and off-shoring of the legal process
- Technology influences on document filing, paper reduction, and remote access of documents
- Mergers, acquisitions, and lateral movement of Partner level attorneys between firms
- Leveraging brand as a business strategy and business development initiative
- Mentorship, transparency, and communication needs of young associates
- Recruitment and retention strategies
- Changing business model
- Increased work/life balance concerns vs. expected annual billing hours

Planning and design factors are also affecting this change:

- Dramatic reductions in the space and occupancy metrics in order to improve profits per partner
- Greater mobility as a result of globalization and expansion
- Sustainable design initiatives
- Flexible solutions that can accommodate unforeseen change
- Creating the appropriate balance between private, collaborative, learning, and social work modes

Private Office Areas

Executive and Manager office spaces that require heads down and focused work often include the below tasks. A private office is typically the most efficient and, in some cases, confidential way to complete these tasks.

- Brief creation and review
- Research

- Confidential phone calls
- Negotiations
- Team meetings
- Ample, easily accessed, active file storage
- Multiple monitors for cross-referencing documents
- Spread space
- Reference material storage
- Acoustical privacy



Though private offices are not obsolete, and as mentioned above regarding planning and design in legal office environments, the size of private offices has been shrinking. As a result, double offices or dual stations are becoming more commonplace. Creating a double office may be the appropriate solution to make the most of the space that is available.

(Continued on page 9)

Current Trends In Legal Workplace Environments

(Continued from page 8)

Flexibility

Legal office spaces requiring office furniture for administrative and manager level positions typically call for maximum flexibility. This can be addressed with the use of an open plan or open office environments:

- Reduced office and workstation standards necessitate this flexibility
- Universal office approaches for all attorney levels require workstations to adapt for all levels
- Universal workspace approaches for paralegals, legal assistants, teaming, again, require workstations to adapt
- Spaces for copy/print areas, file storage, and contract lawyers should be flexible

Collaborative

Nearly all office environments will have collaborative areas and legal offices are not any different. Teamwork areas for conferencing, project teams, and mobile workers are an everyday necessity in a legal workplace. These areas can be used for:

- Client and specific case team meetings
- Practice group meetings
- Mock trial sessions
- Westlaw research updates
- Indexing/coding/discovery review processes
- Summer internship programs
- Mentorship initiatives
- Cross-discipline teaming

- Departmental meetings
- Enhanced communal spaces as informal meeting spaces
- Web based vendor presentations

Learning Areas

- Software, hardware, and network training
- CLE – Continuing Legal Education
- BYOD – Bring Your Own Device training
- Mock trial sessions
- Westlaw and other database research training
- Reform acts and initiatives training
- Management training



Tables and work surfaces with plenty of space and open visuals allow for clear lines of communication and sharing. Touchdown stations or pedestals with cushions, as shown above, will also encourage collaborative teamwork.

Social Areas

- Client seminars
- Client use of law firm facilities
- Practice group meetings
- Partner and Associate group meetings

Conferencing for internal or external members and learning areas are critical to the success of an office environment. Using rooms with video conferencing capabilities, or mobile tables that include power or casters, will ensure that both social and learning areas are being used and being used efficiently in a legal office.

When maximizing your legal office environment, remember the following key points:

(Continued on page 10)

Current Trends In Legal Workplace Environments

(Continued from page 9)

Privacy and Collaboration

A changing workplace requires furniture that supports new ways of working, balancing the needs of the office with the needs of individual workers. Your office furniture should accommodate private and confidential work, while offering collaborative features for occasions that require teamwork.

Flexibility

Whether furnishing new offices or renovating existing ones, a furniture solution should optimize your work environment. As technology enables people to do more with less office space, furniture balances the need for physical storage while integrating flexible features for the digital world.

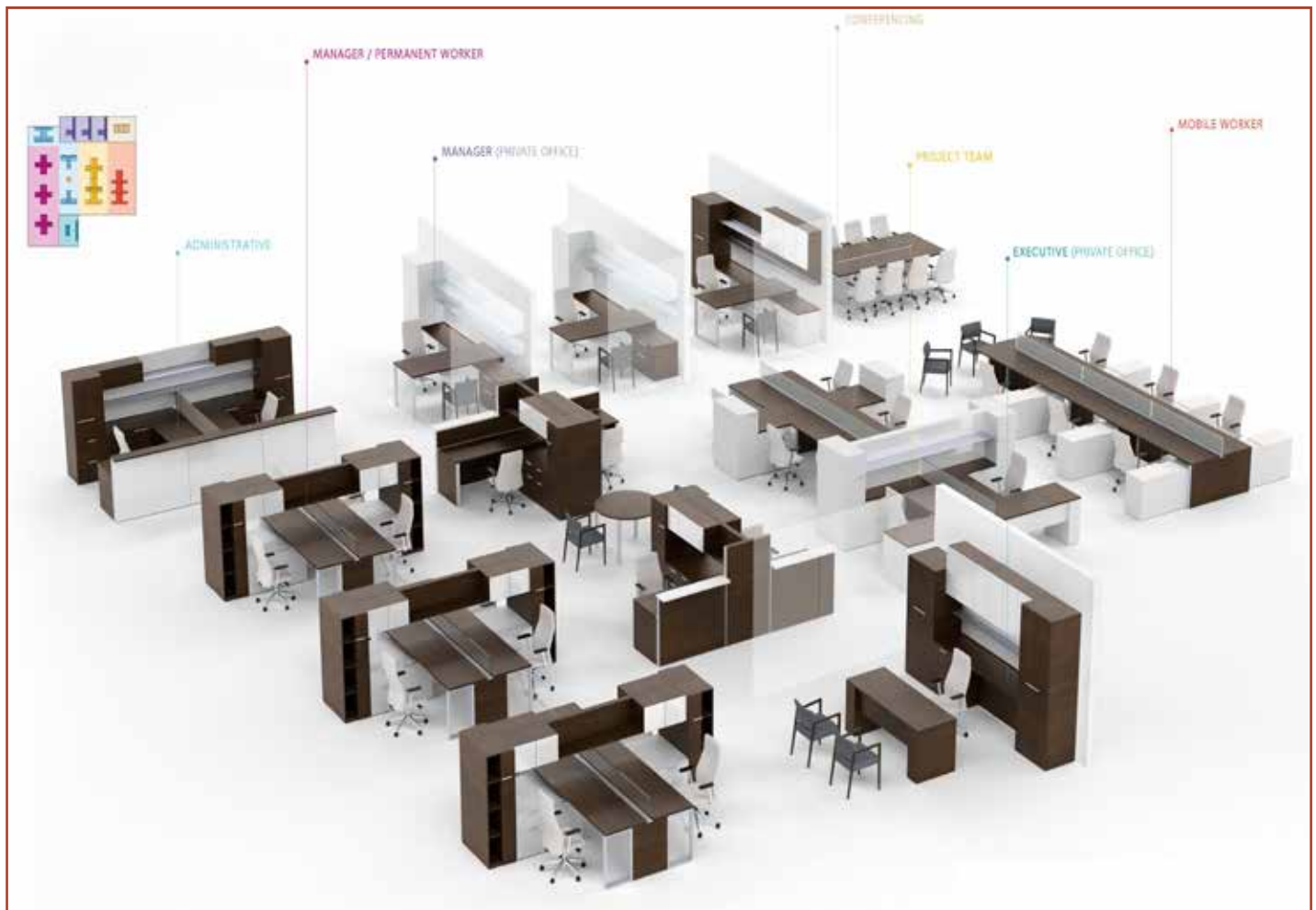
Design Depth

Workplace furnishings reflect the image of a firm. There is something to be said for a professional, sophisticated aesthetic that is carried through an entire office. Substantial presence, high-end fit and finish, and warmth of materials are all qualities office furniture can bring to a space, from private offices to support areas and collaborative areas.

The workspace arrangement shown in the below floor plan takes both the business, as well as planning, and design factors into account, and creates a successful work environment. Though the open plan and shared workspace is becoming more prominent, the need for private office areas is still essential in a legal environment. It is the responsibility of office furniture providers to effectively aid customers in maximizing their office space based on their specific needs and requirements, whether those requirements consist of private offices, open offices, or a combination of both.

Knowing and understanding legal workplace trends, there is certainly more to purchasing law office furniture than meets the eye. This sample floor plan shows how the changes in legal workplace environments as discussed can be taken into account to create a functional office that maximizes your space, thus enhancing the work you do.

Tracy Nagel is a Business Development Manager at The Gunlocke Company, LLC in New York, NY



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IMPROVED MARKET CONDITIONS FOR PROPERTY / CASUALTY INSURANCE

MODERATE PREDICTIONS FOR RATE INCREASE IN 2014

BY IAN T. MATYJEWICZ, ESQ.

Property and Casualty (P & C) insurance rates rose between 2.7% and 11% overall in the first six months of 2013, which continued an upward trend started in the fourth quarter of 2010. Industry experts cite the low-interest-rate environment and increasingly volatile weather conditions as the basis for the continuation of this upward trend into the first half of the year.

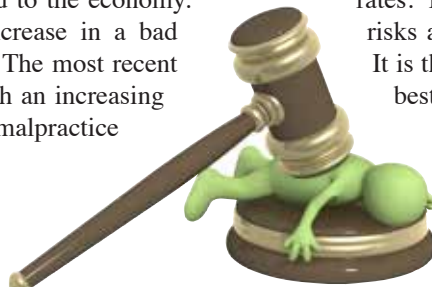
In the Lawyers Professional Liability (LPL) insurance space, depressed premiums from a prolonged soft market and poor loss experience were also contributing factors to insurers' push for higher premiums during the first six months of 2013. Legal malpractice claim trends are directly related to the economy. The quantity of these claims generally increase in a bad economy and decrease in a good economy. The most recent recession has brought about like results with an increasing number of law firm clients pursuing legal malpractice claims to recoup losses.

During the first half of 2013, LPL insurance rates generally rose 3% to 15% across the board. However, during the second half of 2013, an influx of alternative capital to the insurance industry moderated the rate increases on many lines of insurance, including LPL insurance. Unlike the blanket increases seen in the first half of the year, underwriters are now taking into account material factors that differentiate one law firm from another. Firms with good claims histories, the ability to demonstrate expertise in their area(s) of practice, and proper loss controls are renewing at close to or at expiring terms. On the other hand, underwriters continue to be adamant in requesting sharp increases from firms with poor claims histories, particularly those that have failed to rectify inadequate loss controls and /or unsatisfactory risk management practices.

In New Jersey, although capacity is at an all time high, an increasing number of insurers are shifting their LPL insurance

policies from admitted to surplus lines forms due to poor loss experience in the State. While this does not necessarily mean a curtailment of coverage, differences in policy language could be significant depending on a firm's specific LPL insurance needs. A comprehensive policy review should therefore be performed before changing policy forms. A broker experienced servicing the professional liability insurance needs of law firms should be able to assist with any and all reviews.

As we look to 2014, the current trend in New Jersey is predicted to continue. Firms considered above-average risks are expected to renew with modest decreases or at flat rates. However, firms perceived as below-average risks are projected to receive 5% to 25% increases. It is therefore more important than ever to make the best impression possible on renewal.



Tips for Mitigating Rate Increases

In order to make the best impression on renewal law firms should:

- Get applications in early.
- Distinguish themselves by showing expertise in the firm's specific area(s) of practice.
- Clearly explain loss controls on an application.
- Review and update their Risk Management Plans and ensure these plans are implemented and practiced on a regular basis.
- In some cases, meet with the underwriter to help him or her differentiate the firm.
- In the event of a claim, acknowledge the error and explain what measures have been taken to ensure the same mistake will not happen in the future.

Ian T. Matyjewicz, J.D., is a Vice President with Herbert L. Jamison & Co., in West Orange

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SMALL CHANGES, BIG REWARDS: EMPLOYING THE DISABLED

BY DEIRDRE PETERSEN

The state of New Jersey is a richly diverse state; one of the three most diverse states in the country, and our legal community has made great strides to recognize the benefits of diversity in our bench and bar. There is, however, still an available population with an extraordinary range of untapped skills and abilities; the disabled.

According to the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, of the nearly 400,000 New Jerseyans who make up the workforce population of 18 to 64 year olds with disabilities, the rates of unemployment are double that of those without disabilities. The disabled also tend to work less than full-time or year-round. They also earn less; about 37% less than their non-disabled co-workers, with many working disabled living at or below the poverty line.

The representative statistics in the legal community are far worse. According to the ABA, the percentage of attorneys reported as being disabled is far lower than that of the national statistics on the percentage of Americans with disabilities. In an NALP survey of 110,000 lawyers, it was reported that .23% of those lawyers were disabled. With respect to support staff and administration, I was unable to find any statistics. Access to opportunities in the legal profession is just as important to people with disabilities as it is to minorities and women.

So, what can the legal administrators of New Jersey do to successfully address the challenges of inclusion and advance the commitment to diversity in our firms?

As with so many other initiatives, we must gain the support of the firm leadership. A senior leader or committee must take an active role in the development, communication, and support of your plan for inclusion. Try to find this leadership in those with an understanding and empathy toward the initiative; perhaps someone with personal experience.

The initiative requires time and resources. Don't think of this initiative as a short-term project. Start with a plan and keep working to expand and improve it. Keep communicating and supporting the core values of the plan. This is an ongoing mission which must become incorporated into the firm vision and principles. We as administrators must set the example. We must walk the walk.

See this as a business imperative. The case for employing the disabled goes well beyond filling an open job. There are financial benefits. People with disabilities generally have terrific work ethic, lower absenteeism, and higher retention rates. There are often federal, state, or local incentives for hiring the disabled. The costs involved with accommodating a disabled employee are much less than one would expect, and usually under \$500. There are benefits in marketing. Individuals with disabilities and their families, friends and associates represent a large market share. When firms employ the disabled, they are recognized as more representative and diverse by the communities they serve.

People with disabilities bring creativity and innovation to the workplace. Many individuals with disabilities are inventive problem solvers with exceptional abilities. Many of these individuals have had to face tremendous challenges to achieve their goals. They are tenacious and strong. They are dedicated, hard-working, driven individuals with a great desire to improve business processes and add value to the workplace. In fact, according to the Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 97% of employers who have hired an individual with a disability would hire an individual with a disability again in the future.

Educate and train everyone in the firm. Incorporate a disability focus into your diversity training program to educate everyone about the value that people with disabilities bring to your firm. Teach people to foster commonalities and embrace

“...according to the Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 97% of employers who have hired an individual with a disability would hire an individual with a disability again in the future.”

(Continued on page 15)

Small Changes, Big Rewards

(Continued from page 14)

the differences in a positive light with the firm's mission and goals as the driving force. Encourage creativity and innovation on all levels to allow greater opportunities for progress and change. Talk to each other and talk to the disabled. Quell the uneasiness with open communication. Many individuals with disabilities have been self-advocates for years and are happy to discuss their challenges and abilities.

Get help. There are countless public and private resources where you will find all the assistance you need in addressing concerns about the law, accommodation, and hiring. The Office of Disability of Employment Policy and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission have comprehensive websites. ForEmployers.com, which is dedicated to bridging the needs of the business community and the employment needs of people with disabilities, offers guidance and information, from basic etiquette to legal resources and guidelines to potential employers. Nadine Vogel and her

team at Springboard Consulting in Mendham assist global corporations with the preparation of their organizations to embrace disabled workers and seamlessly integrate policies and practices into the organization's culture. In New Jersey, there are dozens of organizations devoted to the needs of the disabled and they are all eager to assist employers in finding appropriate opportunities for the populations they support. Finally, look to each other. Seek out other firm leaders and administrators who have been successful, or not. Listen to their experiences and use them to guide you in your plan.

As administrators, we strive to improve productivity and profitability. In hiring, we seek the best possible candidates for our firms. By casting your net more broadly, you will be giving yourself yet another opportunity to do just that.

*Deirdre Petersen is the Administrator at
Skoloff & Wolfe, P.C. in Livingston*



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SUPREME COURT RULING ON THE DEFENSE OF MARRIAGE ACT AND EFFECT ON EMPLOYEE BENEFIT PLANS

BY MARK SHORE

On September 21, 1996, former President Clinton signed The Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) into law, out of concern regarding how state legalization of same-sex marriage would affect other states, federal laws, and traditional views of marriage. Recently, the Supreme Court struck down sections of the act, and law firms should adjust their human resources policies to accommodate these changes.

Background

DOMA has two sections addressing same-sex marriage:

- Section 2 provides that no US state or political subdivision is required to recognize a same-sex marriage treated as a marriage in another state.
- Section 3 provides that, under Federal law, the term “marriage” means only a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife.

On June 26, 2013, the US Supreme Court struck down Section 3 as unconstitutional, and violating the US Constitution guarantee of equal protection. This ruling has immediate and far reaching impacts on a number of Employee Benefits, including but not limited to health insurance, 401(k), HIPAA, Social Security, taxes, and FMLA.

The Supreme Court’s ruling affords legally married same-sex couples the same benefits and protections under federal law as opposite-sex married couples. Complicating the issues surrounding the ruling is the different treatment of same-sex marriages by states and the Federal Government. The Court’s ruling does not require states to permit same-sex marriage, nor does it address the part of DOMA that allows states to choose whether to recognize same-sex marriages performed in other states.

DOMA does not prohibit employers from providing health benefits to their employees’ domestic partners or same-sex spouses, however, the administration, taxation, and eligibility for these benefits may vary. Further complications arise if an employee was married in a state that recognizes same-sex marriages, i.e., New York, but works in a state that does not, i.e., Connecticut.

The IRS adopted a “state of celebration” policy, Revenue

Ruling 2013-17, for determining when a same-sex marriage will be treated as valid for purposes of federal tax law. In Technical Release 2013-04, the Department of Labor (DOL) also adopted the state of celebration approach for purposes of federal employee benefit laws that fall under ERISA.

Changes

Due to the Court’s ruling, employers in jurisdictions that allow or recognize same-sex marriage must treat employees’ same-sex and opposite-sex spouses equally for purposes of federal employee benefit laws. Some of the changes include, but are not limited to:

- Employers no longer need to impute additional income to an employee who covers their same-sex spouse as a dependent under the employer’s health plan;
- Eligible employees may pay for their same-sex spouse’s health insurance on a pre-tax basis through a Cafeteria (or Section 125) plan;
- Eligible employees may receive tax-free reimbursements for expenses of their same-sex spouse through a FSA, HRA or HSA;
- A same-sex spouse is considered a spouse or family member with regards to the FMLA;
- Same-sex spouses may qualify as a spouse for COBRA purposes and be eligible for their own COBRA election rights and criteria;
- Retirement plans will be required to pay benefits in the form of a Qualified Joint and Survivor Annuity or Qualified Preretirement Survivor Annuity, unless the spouse consents to an alternate form of distribution, or, in the case of a 401(k) or other defined contribution plan, the spouse will receive a 100% death benefit (unless waived);
- Spouses can receive a portion of a participant’s retirement benefit and are entitled to special rules regarding distribution eligibility and tax treatment;
- Same-sex spouses can roll to their own IRA or a qualified plan (non-spouse beneficiaries can only roll to an inherited IRA).

Additional guidance will be required from federal agencies affected by the revised definitions of spouse and marriage. The ruling affects more than 1,000 federal laws. The Court’s ruling did not establish a constitutional right to same-sex marriage.

(Continued on page 17)

Supreme Court Ruling on the Defense of Marriage

(Continued from page 16)

The ruling applies only to same-sex marriages that are valid under state law, which does not typically include civil unions or domestic partnerships.

Compliance

Because New Jersey recently declared same-sex marriages must be allowed, many of the above benefits must be made available to New Jersey employees, unless the ruling is pended if/when an appeal is filed (not as of this writing).

Employers should consider the following compliance steps:

- Work with employees to identify same-sex spouses based on the state of celebration rule;
- Update payroll systems to treat legally married same-sex couples as spouses and stop imputing income to employees for tax-free employee benefits provided to a same-sex spouse;
- Review the eligibility terms of benefit plans to ensure that

they are in compliance with applicable law and that the terms clearly reflect the employer's decisions regarding eligibility;

- For employee benefits governed by federal law (for example, FMLA and COBRA), confirm policies and procedures treat legally married same-sex couples as spouses and make any necessary updates;
- Communicate benefit changes affecting same-sex spouses to employees.

Additionally, employers should ensure their Cafeteria Plan, 401(k) and other deferred compensation plans, and other Employee Benefit Program related documents remain up to date and compliant with respect to the changes afforded by the Supreme Court and subsequent New Jersey State rulings.

Mark Shore is President of Atlas Consulting Services, LLC in Springfield

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THINKING ABOUT DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

BY GREG DEATZ

Introduction

First, and for full disclosure, I am a 40-year old white man. I have been married for 19 years, never divorced. I have three children, a dog, a house, and two cars. I live in a quiet suburban town in New Jersey. I celebrate all of the Christian holidays. I also believe that we have very real issues in our society with diversity and inclusion. There are no easy answers to creating a more diverse workplace. But, I believe that we won't answer those questions until all of us are willing to acknowledge that a problem exists, and that we must all be part of the solution.

With that being said, I have a few questions for you, just to get started. How many members of your firm's Executive Committee are women? What about your general partnership? Your firm's associates? How many women vs. men are in the US?

The fact of the matter is, even today, some 50 years after the 1960's heralded a new age of race and gender equality, minorities (including women) continue to be underrepresented in leadership positions throughout the corporate world. In the case of the challenges women continue to face, Sheryl Sandberg makes a remarkably compelling case in her book *Lean In* for men and women to take a hard look at themselves and the roles they play in their personal and work lives. She

argues that society places a huge burden on men and women alike to play their roles "appropriately," and that those who challenge those roles are often marginalized.

Over the years, I'm sure that you have heard many people talk about big ideas related to diversity and inclusion: Recruiting, Retention, Marketing, Diversity Committees, and Sensitivity Training. These ideas represent components of any holistic strategy that we can and should consider. However, these big ideas often overshadow some of the simpler things that we can do to help foster an environment of inclusion. In the spirit of many of the suggestions that Sandberg makes in her book, this article offers three suggestions that are easy enough to put into practice right away, but big enough that they may help us to put a few cracks in the glass ceiling.

Stop and Think

Consider the examples below of people you may have met over the course of your career. While they are general, they are meant to point out that many of our judgments of others come from our personal frame of reference—our upbringing, our race, our gender, our religion, our sexual orientation, and our base character traits. And while it may be perfectly appropriate to demand punctuality, for example, the way you internalize the challenge, approach the problem, and ultimately judge the person who is habitually late, may deserve some thought.

Have you ever met someone like this:	Did you stop to think:
The outspoken and ambitious woman who comes across to colleagues as domineering and unfriendly...	You might consider that the outspoken and ambitious woman is simply being outspoken and ambitious, a character trait that is often vilified in women but revered in men.
The quiet and analytical man who comes across to colleagues as weak and unassertive...	Quiet people can be marginalized because their voices can be easily drowned out by others who are more outgoing. Does this make the "quiet and analytical" person weak and unassertive, or just different? Does this person deserve to be heard?
The subordinate who seems to take no initiative for herself, and is therefore judged harshly by her manager...	The American culture honors those who assert their ideas and concerns to authority figures. However, there are many cultures that are highly hierarchical and hold individuals in high esteem for respecting and obeying authority without question. Could the subordinate be acting according to the rules of her culture?

(Continued on page 19)

Thinking About Diversity and Inclusion

(Continued from page 18)

The colleague who habitually arrives to team meetings late...

The literature is filled with discussions of monochronic cultures (such as the American culture) and polychronic cultures (such as you might find in Mexico or China). Punctuality for a monochronic person is not negotiable, whereas start times for his polychronic counterpart is more flexible. Is your colleague arriving late because he is a jerk, or because he is perceiving time differently from you?

As much as we judge others for the outcomes of their actions, we also judge people based on our expectations for their behavior. We judge men differently based on their gender, their race, their religion, and so on.

Suggestion 1: Take the time to stop and think. If you take the time to stop and think about your judgments of others and others' judgments of you, you may find a way to work past an issue that is either holding you or someone else back.

Capitalize on Diversity

Once upon a time, a Caucasian woman (call her Susan), was preparing to take the deposition of an African-American woman who was claiming that Susan's client's product was causing her to go bald. Susan's colleague, an African-American attorney, heard about the deposition, and made a very simple suggestion: Ask her if her weave is too tight. Many of the stylists who do weaves make them too tight, and tight weaves are common concerns in premature hair loss. Ultimately, Susan was successful defending her client, and as you can imagine, this line of questioning was a key to Susan's success.

This story highlights the importance of capitalizing on the diverse groups of people in your organization, especially in a law firm. When you grow up in a particular culture, you are so indoctrinated that "common sense" to you may be a revelation to someone else from another background. So it is with weaves.

Suggestion 2: We need to acknowledge our differences and be willing to capitalize on them.

Become an Advocate for Yourself

Sandberg argues in *Lean In* that women are taught from an early age to be less an advocate for themselves than for others, and men are taught the opposite. Unfortunately, people who advocate for themselves tend to get ahead. People who don't tend to fall behind.

Suggestion 3: Regardless of your background or genetic code, become an advocate for yourself and take credit where it is due.

Summary

I can't hope to capture in this column all of the ideas that are out there regarding diversity, but these three very simple ideas can be put into practice immediately.

Just to recap:

- Suggestion 1: Take the time to stop and think. If you take the time to stop and think about your judgments of others and others' judgments of you, you may find a way to work past an issue that is either holding you or someone else back.
- Suggestion 2: We need to acknowledge our differences and be willing to capitalize on them.
- Suggestion 3: Regardless of your background or genetic code, become an advocate for yourself and take credit where it is due.

Suggested Reading

While this may seem trite, often one of the simplest ways to challenge your own ideas of diversity is to read. Here is a small list of some good books that may help you consider how you approach diversity at home and at work:

- Sandberg, Sheryl. *Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2013.
- Cain, Susan. *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking*. Broadway Books, 2012.
- Gladwell, Malcolm. *Outliers: The Story of Success*. Little, Brown, and Company, 2008.
- Kofman, Fred. *Conscious Business: How to Build Value Through Values*. ReadHowYouWant, 2012.

Greg Deatz is the Executive Director at Littleton Joyce Ughetta Park & Kelly LLP, in New York, New York

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THE 20TH ANNUAL BUSINESS PARTNER EXPO

BY ELYSSA GOLDSTEIN

Twenty years ago, I was in the third grade learning how to write my name in cursive. Episodes of Full House and neon splatter paint jeans were of far greater interest to me than law firms and business partner relationships.

On the evening of Tuesday, September 24, 2013, now employed by a law firm and very much interested in its business partner relationships, I attended my first Business Partner Expo at Mayfair Farms in West Orange, New Jersey, coinciding with the 20th anniversary of the event.

Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the educational session prior to the Expo, “Spreadsheet Basics for Non-Financial People with Financial Responsibilities,” conducted by Joseph L. James IV of Micro Strategies, however, I heard it was an extremely informative and well-received presentation.

I arrived to the venue for 6:00 pm, ready to experience this highly praised and much anticipated evening with my NJALA colleagues. I was welcomed by Doreen Marino and Robbin Dolan as I signed in to the event (in cursive, I might add) and retrieved my directory of business partners present at this year’s Expo.

At first glance, I was both overwhelmed and intrigued by the number of tables, displays and people occupying the majestic room. Without a predetermined strategy in place, I began my reconnaissance mission by greeting some of the business partners with whom I currently have a working relationship. Once I said hello to these old friends, I circled back to the front of the room to make my introductions to those business partners whom I had never met previously.

As I chatted the evening away with vendors of all varieties, I realized why the annual Expo is so warmly regarded. The Expo personalizes what can often be an impersonal relationship between law firm and business partner. Attending this event allowed me to consider business partners I had never considered before and put faces to names of business partners my firm has used for years, but I had never before met. Instead of relying on the dreaded “cold call,” our business partners were afforded the opportunity to create personal relationships from day one—a necessity in the age of e-mails, webinars, and social media.

Taking the last few bites of my delicious dinner, I was approached by Jim Van Leir and Mitch Rait to purchase my 50/50 raffle tickets. My fellow Administrators and I snatched up the remaining tickets and soon thereafter, we were tasked with counting the money collected in support of this year’s NJALA Community Challenge beneficiary, Wynona’s House. Wynona’s House opened in October of 2000 with the mission of promoting hope, healing, and justice for child victims of abuse and violence in Essex County, New Jersey. On the evening in question, a generous \$1,030.00 was raised through our 50/50 raffle—half going to the aforementioned Wynona’s House and half going to Jason S. Klein of our business partner, Langdon Ford Financial.

In addition to the many fabulous prizes offered by our business partners (two of which I had the pleasure of winning, along with \$12.00 in the Document Solutions’ Cash Cube, which will naturally go directly to the purchase of additional Full House DVDs), two regional conference scholarships and one national scholarship were presented to three lucky individuals.

As a first-time attendee of the Expo, I can say without an ounce of bias that it was truly one of the best events in which I have ever participated as a member of any organization. My deep appreciation and respect go out to all the Committee members responsible for coordinating this fabulous evening, as well as to the entire staff of Mayfair Farms for providing such a beautiful backdrop for the event.

Additionally, I would be foolish (and most likely banned from all future Expos) if I didn’t thank our wonderful business partners who continuously take the time to support the NJALA throughout the year. I wish I hadn’t let my naivety and inexperience get the best of me so I could have made time to speak with each and every one of you at the Expo. Luckily, now that I have expressed my gratitude, there is always next year...

Elyssa Goldstein is the Office Manager of the Wayne, New Jersey and New York, New York offices of Gonzalez Saggio & Harlan LLP







REGIONAL CONFERENCE ROUNDUP

BY JACKIE PAMPINELLA

This year, I had the good fortune to win a scholarship to the ALA Regions 1 & 3 Conference & Expo, “Re-think, Re-Tool, Re-Charge,” held October 24-26, 2013, at the Renaissance Hotel in Cleveland, Ohio.

Thanks to the conference planning committee, the conference was conveniently located in Tower City, which was a short cab ride to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, where a few ALA members passed the time before official conference events began. While at the museum, we learned about 50 years of the Rolling Stones, experienced the wonders of thunder-snow, and discovered that almost everything in Cleveland can be blamed on the “Lake Effect.”

This year’s regional conference schedule was packed with valuable educational sessions for both the green and seasoned administrators. While I learned something new or experienced an “a-ha moment” at each session, I was most impressed with this year’s keynote address, entitled “Perform-Ability: Be Your Best When It Matters Most,” presented by Dan Thurmon.

Dan Thurmon is President of Motivation Works, Inc., a management consulting firm based in Georgia. In addition to being a dynamic motivational speaker, Dan is also an author, acrobat, and world-class juggler. Dan effectively incorporated his unique performance skills to engage the audience and serve as a metaphor to communicate his message about being your best when it matters most.

According to Dan, the key to being able to perform or deliver excellence under pressure is to understand the mindset and methods of top performers, and to prepare. Dan calls the ability to be your best when it matters most, “perform-ability.” Dan said that perform-ability is not an innate skill, but that an ability that can be learned and mastered by anyone.

Top performers effectively coordinate, collaborate, and communicate expectations in order to achieve their goals. After the goal has been identified, top performers collaborate with their peers and colleagues to develop strategies to successfully reach their objectives. In order to achieve the objective, they collaborate and develop a strategy to tackle the problem. Dan recruited a volunteer from the audience to demonstrate the method.

Collectively, Dan and his new partner, Joann, set a goal; juggling three balls, 10 times, in front of a room full of people, using only one hand each—no pressure! The team developed a detailed plan to reach their goal by determining which arm each person would use, establishing which partner tossed the first ball, the timing of subsequent tosses, and where to focus their attention during the

process—in the air, not their hands. The team discussed and practiced their plan before they put it into action.

According to Dan, uncertainty, poor, or lack of planning amplifies fear, anxiety, and stress associated with a new task or performance. Top performers are able to tackle those challenges with confidence through proper preparation which includes planning, discipline, and hard work. Preparation is the key to success!

When it was “show time,” the team had a plan of action and initiated the plan. Joann tossed the first ball, Dan threw the second, Joann followed, and so on. During the demonstration, Dan said that after the team planned and prepared, each partner must be able to recognize critical moments and rise to the occasion. If you have an opportunity, or a ball in hand, take action and throw the ball. After a few attempts, the team successfully achieved and exceeded their goal!

After Joann returned to her seat, Dan moved on to more complicated and dangerous stunts which included juggling a machete, hatchet, and mace. During the set, Dan said that it is important to build a strong foundation before you expand and develop your skill set (be able to juggle three balls before you attempt to juggle three blades). Once you are comfortable with the basics, you should push your skills past your comfort zone or the edge of your ability. Top performers continue to learn, expand, and polish their skills by taking on additional challenges and responsibilities.

Dan continued to say that sometimes it is necessary to “let go to get a grip” on a situation. Dan said that top performers learn from past successes and failures, but they realize that once something is out of their control it is necessary to let it go and focus on the next task. Dan illustrated his point literally by letting go of the hatchet in order to catch the machete. After the machete was tossed into the air, he focused on the next task, which was to catch the mace. He reminded us that planning and preparation is within your control. If you prepare properly, you can confidently move forward and take on new challenges with minimal stress.

While Dan’s messages were not new, the method which he delivered those messages was unique and entertaining. I left the key note session energized for the rest of the conference and ready to tackle my new life’s challenges with increased perform-ability!

Jackie Pampinella is the former Office Administrator of Fox Rothschild, LLP, in Roseland



ALA MEMBER SURVEY: PRODUCTIVITY AND PROFITABILITY TOP OF MIND

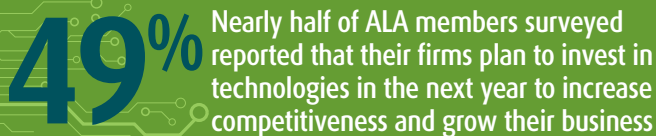
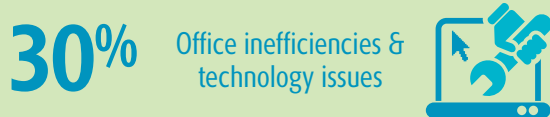
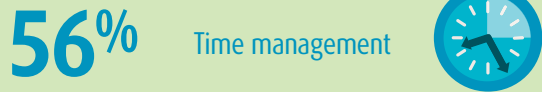
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CHAPTER LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE 2013

BY AUDREY SERBAN

On July 19, 2013, Mary Ellen Dolan and I headed to Atlanta, Georgia for the Chapter Leadership Institute (CLI). This annual event provides Chapter leaders a unique opportunity for learning about and strengthening our Chapter leadership roles, sharing ideas and experiences with colleagues, expanding our network, and increasing our knowledge and leadership skills. This year's theme was "ALA's Shining Stars." It began with ALA President Paul Farnsworth welcoming attendees and guests and providing a preview of the CLI weekend and how to make the most of it. The keynote session was next, "Commanding Without Demanding: Leadership for the Real World," which was presented by Stevie Ray. He taught us that being a leader takes more than just occupying a top position in an organization. You must be able to motivate employees and inspire excellence.

We were then given the opportunity to have a breakout session by Region. This session allowed Chapter leaders to connect with others in their region and gave them an opportunity to meet the regional teams. We learned about the resources available to each Chapter, previewed the fall Regional Conferences, and engaged in topical roundtable discussions. Our Region 1 facilitator was Janine Book and she had everyone go around the room introducing themselves and talk about the strengths and challenges we face as a Chapter. It was interesting because a lot of the Chapters had similar responses. One challenge that was repeatedly given was getting new members involved within our Chapter. The consensus was that too many of the same members were serving on multiple committees. We discussed ways to get others more involved within the Chapter.

Mary Ellen and I decided to make the best of the CLI weekend and attend different sessions. Amongst the ones we attended were "Rules of Engagement—The Business Partner Perspective" where we learned;

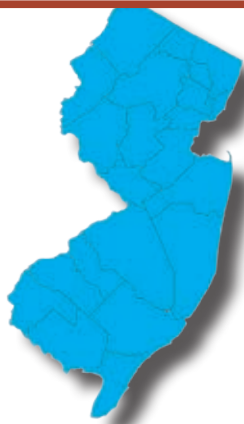
- how and why companies decide to support various Chapters;

- listen to what business partners have to say about their Chapter involvement;
- take back ideas to help strengthen our Chapter's relationship with its business partners; and finally;
- take the opportunity to ask questions pertinent to our Chapter's business partner program.

Another great session was "Servant Leadership—The Lead by Example Project." Effective servant leadership is based on one's desire to serve first, before aspiring to lead. It requires understanding your constituency, and mentoring others to do the same, so they can make their own good decisions about those they serve and lead. This session identified the traits of service and leadership to enhance effectiveness, how diversity (generational as an example) plays a role, and how it can help you to get the most out of your volunteers.

Although this wasn't the first CLI conference I attended, I really wasn't sure what to expect from this weekend. Of course I knew that I would learn something about leadership but what I took away was so much more. CLI gave me an opportunity to learn more about my Chapter and the best practices that were expected. As a member of the NJALA, I usually go to the monthly meetings and different social events. As I become more involved in the Chapter I see how much time and dedication it takes from our members to get things accomplished. By attending CLI, I was able to network with other Chapters (especially in the breakout sessions) and was never more proud to say that I'm a member of the NJALA. We truly have an amazing group of members who work tirelessly to serve the Chapter. I'm calling on everyone to devote some of your talents and time to this Chapter to make it become even more successful. We are ALL Shining Stars!

*Audrey Serban is the Office Manager at
Fisher & Phillips LLP in Murray Hill*



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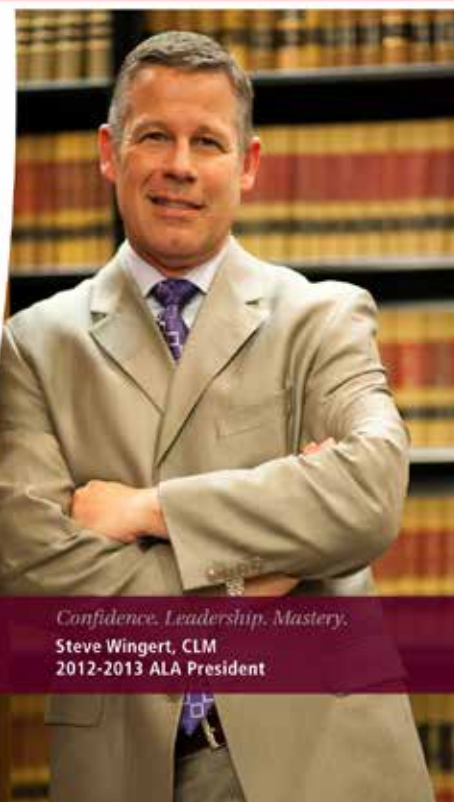
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Tuesday, January 14, 2014 (6:00-9:00 pm)
Monthly Meeting and Workshop at the Highlawn Pavilion in West Orange. Topic: Law Firm Structure, Firm Capital & 2013 Income Taxes, presented by Russell Shinsky. A buffet dinner will be served.

Tuesday, February 11, 2014 (6:00-9:00 pm)
Monthly Meeting and Workshop at the Highlawn Pavilion in West Orange. Topic: The Power of the Mind, presented by Judy Hisson, Nesso Strategies. A buffet dinner will be served.

May 10-22, 2014

ALA National Conference in Toronto, Canada. Join your friends at this year's National Conference, which will be packed with information, educational sessions, workshops, guest speakers, and plenty of networking time with business partners and peers. Registration begins December 2! The 2014 Annual Conference Committee has announced that former U.S. Rep. Gabrielle "Gabby" Giffords and her husband, Captain Mark Kelly, a retired combat pilot and astronaut, are confirmed to appear as the opening keynote speakers for the conference. See www.alanet.org for details.

For information about:

Monthly meetings – Please contact Audrey Serban of Fisher & Phillips at 908-516-1061.

Educational Workshops – Please contact Nancy Harris, of Gordon Rees at 973-549-2500.

NJALA Socials – Please contact Judy Sotardi of Forman Holt Eliades & Youngman, LLC at 201-845-1000, ext. 376.

ALA Webinars: Registration and general information is posted on the ALA site, www.alanet.org/education/regconf/telesem.html.



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UP TO THE MINUTE ...

SUMMARY OF MINUTES OF THE NJALA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETINGS HELD THROUGH OCTOBER, 2013

BY DOREEN MARINO, PHR

Board Members are Mary Ellen Dolan, President; Audrey Serban, Vice President, Programs; Robbin Dolan, Vice President, Membership; Michael Harrison, Treasurer; Doreen Marino, Secretary; Gayle Englert, Immediate Past President; Fran Puntillo, Trustee; Kurt Brown, Trustee; Mary Beth Donoghue, Trustee; Mitchell Rait, Trustee; Jim Van Leir, Trustee; Nancy Harris, Alternate Trustee; Teri Siegle, Alternate Trustee; Louise Ruffo, Alternate Trustee; and Jim Wostbrock, Alternate Trustee.

President's Report

Mary Ellen introduced New Board Member Jim Wostbrock and welcomed him aboard. Mary Ellen also mentioned that she would like to grant a national scholarship to an outstanding volunteer and wanted approval to move forward with that program. The Board unanimously agreed.

Treasurer's Report/Budget

Michael Harrison noted that the year-to-year comparison was expected to be slightly skewed since the current Chapter year was shortened due to the fiscal year change. Taking that into consideration, everything appears to be as expected. Michael noted, however, that the business partner sponsorships increased by 128.28%. The Board thanked Mary Ellen Dolan for all her successful efforts in raising sponsorship. The Board discussed upcoming financial plans in the budget which includes a new computer for the Chapter financial software and records, and an upgraded user-friendly website. Both issues were previously approved by the Board at earlier meetings. The Treasurer submitted a set of financial reports that are attached to the minutes.

Membership Reports/Renewals

Robbin Dolan reported that we have 141 members, which was equivalent to the amount of members last year.

Programs Report

Audrey Serban reported that she has confirmed that all educational sessions are scheduled and confirmed except for March and April 2014. Audrey is exploring different topics for these sessions.

Community Challenge

Jim Van Leir and Mitch Rait confirmed that a Habitat for

Humanity was scheduled for November 2, 2013. Mary Ellen Dolan proposed and the Board agreed to hold a 50/50 raffle at both the holiday social and June social as well as annual Business Partner Expo. It was also proposed and the Board agreed that the Chapter will match the donation to the charity, including last month's charity drive – Wynona's House. The Board discussed criteria for charities and recommended that suggestions be brought to the attention of the Community Challenge Committee.

Business Partner Relations

Mary Ellen Dolan reported that the Business Sponsors are requesting more visibility for their sponsorship. Mary Ellen requested that the Board suggest some ideas to keep the Business Sponsors engaged with the Chapter.

Business Partner Exposition

Mary Ellen Dolan believes it was a great event with lots of new Business Partners this year. The Board was very pleased with the evening.

ALA IDEA Awards

Gayle Englert reported that ALA's new awards program is a move toward criteria that allows all members to have equal opportunity to win an award. The new awards incorporate expanded areas as well as new qualifications. Gayle explained that submissions for the awards will be due in January and asked the Board to consider and recommend any ideas for submission.

Newsletter Report

Robbin Dolan reported that the Newsletter volumes will be renamed "Volume I, Volume 2, Volume 3 and Volume 4" to simplify things. Therefore, Volume 4 of 2013 is underway, being themed Diversity and Inclusion to be completed by mid-December 2013. Robbin confirmed to the Board that this last volume for the year will be done in both print and hard copy, and thereafter all future copies will be done electronically.

Chapter Audit

Michael Harrison reported that Mike Sikora approved the 2012 Chapter Audit.

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Ms. D

BY FRAN PUNTILLO, CLM

One of the suggestions we frequently hear when the NJALA Board solicits ways to improve our Chapter is that the membership should work harder to mix and mingle at our monthly chapter meetings. Some members, especially new ones, feel isolated or uncomfortable when entering the room at the Highlawn. The Board has tried to remedy this by urging the general membership to greet new (and even relatively new) members and to go out of their way to welcome them by encouraging them to join a group already seated around a table. This endeavor benefits both the new members as well as the “senior” members. We have some really exceptional people in our Chapter—you’re missing an opportunity if you don’t mix and mingle. Try it—you’ll like it!

So let’s try something different with this article. Instead of simply introducing a member to you as I usually try to do in this section of our newsletter, I’ll withhold the name and just give you hints about this member’s identity. Let’s see how well you “mixed and mingled” recently: Can you identify this person before you get to the end of the article? No peeking ahead...

For now, let’s call the subject of this article “Ms. D.”

Ms. D was born in Catskills, New York. She earned her degree in Psychology and Sociology from the University of Kansas. Initially, she thought she’d go to law school after graduation and become a lawyer. But her spouse took a job in New Jersey, and she followed him back east in 1986, putting her dream of attending law school on hold. She took a paralegal position in an insurance defense firm but didn’t enjoy the repetitive nature of the work. She moved on to Hoagland, Longo, Moran, Dunst & Doukas, LLP in New Brunswick and found two special and unexpected “gifts” at that firm which changed the direction of her professional life. One of those “gifts” was Ken Doukas, who mentored her and introduced her to legal management. He also introduced her to computers (more about this later), the second “gift.”

After cutting her teeth on the ins, outs, ups, and downs of legal management at that firm for several years, Ms. D moved to a larger New Jersey law firm. It was there she realized she preferred working at small- to mid-sized firms where she felt she could be more effective as a “hands-on Administrator” rather than a delegator. So she changed jobs once again, working at a smaller law firm in Morristown. After almost 17 years there, she moved to Skoloff & Wolfe, P.C. in 2010. There she finds she can be directly involved in all the daily functions of a law firm. What she enjoys

most about her position at Skoloff is the variety of challenges the role of Administrator offers: Every day is different from the previous one.

Presently, Ms. D feels that the Human Resources portion of the job is the most challenging, but also the most rewarding. Her favorite tasks at the firm are related to technology. One of her current goals is to improve her firm’s usage of technology. Her firm, like many others in New Jersey, was negatively impacted by Superstorm Sandy. So Ms. D is looking to move the firm’s email to the Cloud and to update and consolidate the firm’s other software, including the adoption of a document management system. Ms. D’s focus is not just preparing for disaster recovery and the next storm—she feels strongly that technology isn’t static: In order to be competitive, law firms must keep reasonably current with the trends and upgrades in software and hardware.



When I asked her if there was anything she’d do differently if she could go back in time, she surprised me by saying “yes.” She said she’d probably pursue a career in technology rather than law (thank you, Mr. Doukas). She loves data and the way data can be managed or manipulated to become something useful no matter what limitations the software may impose. We talked a bit about the “downside” of IT, and Ms. D

confessed that one of her pet peeves is poor spelling. We chatted about how some people don’t communicate verbally anymore, and often lack the “human” element of communication. We moaned and groaned about how Texters miss out because they can’t read facial expressions and hear the different tones of the human voice when communicating. They seem to prefer to “speak” by using the cold and impersonal strokes pecked out on a keyboard. Oops, my own feelings are bleeding through here, sorry! Moving on...

Ms. D joined ALA in 2010 and NJALA in 2013. She is also a member of SHRM and ILTA. When asked about her NJALA membership, she says she values it because of the resources, both personal and professional, that it offers. She particularly enjoys the investigatory emails that members send around. There’s always something new to learn and people willing to share their experiences across the chapter’s membership.

I asked Ms. D which two people in history she would most like to meet. She said Amelia Earhart, America’s aviation pioneer and the first female to fly solo over the ocean. I think the appeal for Ms. D is the strength Amelia Earhart demonstrated throughout most of her life as well as her courage and sense of adventure. The other

(Continued on page 34)

Ms. D*(Continued from page 33)*

person she'd like to meet is William Shakespeare—Ms. D just wants to ask him a few questions about the plays he wrote. Ms. D's hero is her grandmother who raised two sons and ran a business without the help of a spouse at a time when single parenting wasn't as common as it is today. Again, much like Amelia Earhart, I believe the strength of her grandmother's character is what most appeals to Ms. D. After speaking with Ms. D, I think this is further proof that the apple doesn't fall far from the tree. Please read on...

In addition to working as a legal administrator at a law firm, Ms. D is a single Mom with two children. Her daughter Emma is 15 years old and her daughter Hannah is 13. Emma has Down Syndrome and Hanna has ADHD. Added to that household are two pets, a cat named Ellie and a dog named Caylee. On week nights after work, Ms. D races home, picks up Hannah and drops her off at the YMCA pool. She and Emma do chores until 8pm then head back to the Y to retrieve Hannah. At family dinner time, which happens after 8pm on most nights, the three ladies enjoy "amazingness" which is what Emma calls eating comfort food plus snuggling while wearing PJs. Ms. D and Emma spend time on most weekends during the school year at swim meets, cheering on Hanna, who swims competitively.

Weekends at their home are filled with catching up on chores, homework, doing errands that they didn't get to during their busy work week and taking naps (I must confess, I've never met anyone who will admit to napping on weekends—Way To Go Girls!). If and when the weather is warm and clear on Sundays, they pack up a day's worth of food and drink and head to Island Beach State Park where the three ladies enjoy relaxing and swimming at one of New Jersey's most beautiful and unspoiled beaches. Ms. D describes her life as "busy but fulfilling" —I'd say that's an understatement.

Ms. D also enjoys reading. I wasn't sure how she fits reading into her busy schedule until Ms. D confessed to being an insomniac. She and her Kindle are BFFs in the wee hours of the morning. She likes to read historical novels such as *Mistress and Maid* by Dinah Craik, *One Thousand White Women* by Jim Fergus, and any fiction by Sandra Brown. She also reads to her girls—they loved the Harry Potter series.

When I asked her what she's most proud of in her life, she answered quickly and with the utmost conviction—her daughters. They are the love of her life. Read her article on law firms and disabilities in this edition of our newsletter. She is speaking from experience but more importantly, from her heart. Ms. D says the personal qualities she most values in herself are her ability to prioritize and juggle. Having listened to her describe her marvelous life, I'd have to say I agree!

So how did you do? Did you mix and mingle well recently? Did you recognize this person before I tell you her name? If you didn't, you have missed out. This very special lady is Deirdre Petersen. Make sure you stop and chat with her at your next opportunity at one of our NJALA meetings or workshops. She'll brighten your day!

*Fran Puntillo, CLM, is the Office Manager of
Weiner Lesniak, LLP in Parsippany*

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HATCHES, MATCHES & DISPATCHES

BY CINDY LANDIS

Personally speaking, life has been going along quietly....so this is short and sweet. Here are some highlights from NJALA members:

Judy Sotardi (Forman Holt Eliades & Youngman) says "Ah the circle of life!" Just five years ago her daughter Erika was starting college and her son John was starting kindergarten. This year her son is going into the 5th grade and her daughter will be teaching Math and Science to her very own fifth grade class in Ascension Parish near Baton Rouge. Judy is very proud and excited for her.

Barbara Maglin (Weiner Lesniak) has a few things to share this time around. She started taking golf lessons over the summer and her family has joined the Newton County Club and has been golfing over the weekends (especially with this gorgeous weather). Her oldest son has graduated from EMT school and is currently looking for employment in the medical field, and she is looking forward to their next vacation in November when her family goes to Disney World for a week.

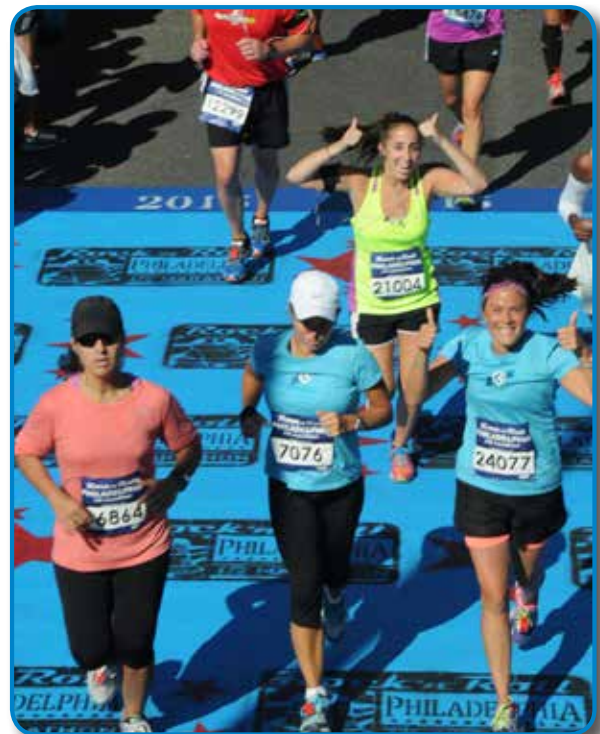
Ron Henry (Wilentz Goldman & Spitzer) says "Grandparenthood is a trip." He and his wife Donna spent a September week in Leipzig, Germany with Oscar and Andre, their 7 month old grandsons.



Elli Albert (Fox Rothschild, LLP) traveled with her Mom, sister, and brother-in-law to a family reunion over Labor Day weekend in upstate Utica, New York. She reports that it was

great visiting with cousins from her dad's side (Dad passed in 2003), many of whom she hadn't seen for at some 25 years, and locating her grandparents' house that she used to visit as a child. While there, Elli and family were treated to a number of local favorite foods: "Utica Greens," "Chicken Riggies," and "Cold Tomato Pie" (which is not pizza). Google them! Elli hopes her next vacation will be somewhere warm and near the ocean. The Caribbean, maybe?!

Audrey Serban (Fisher & Phillips) spent the last 3 months training for a half marathon and accomplished her first ever in Philadelphia on September 15th. She wishes there was time to rest but her second half marathon was on November 17th. The fun continues!



(Continued on page 36)

Hatches Matches and Dispatches

(Continued from page 35)

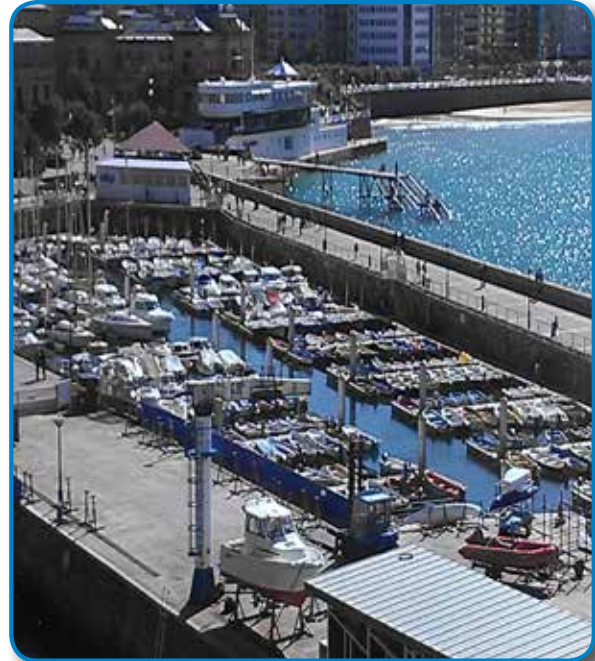
Teri Siegle (Ansell Grimm & Aaron) reports her only son, and last child, will be graduating high school this year. They have been busy looking at schools and have started the college application process. His interest is in Game Design, so they have really been focusing on schools that offer a major in that field. His top choice, as of now, is George Mason University in Fairfax, Va. They are keeping their fingers crossed that he will be accepted. It's a sad, but at the same time, exciting chapter in their lives.



Robbin Dolan (Laddey Clark & Ryan) reports that her son Greg recently received his Eagle Scout rank. His project consisted of rehabilitating the archery range at the YMCA's Camp Linwood McDonald in Sandyston, NJ. Greg designed and built new target stands, hung new backdrop netting, and expanded the viewing area. Greg is a senior at High Point Regional High School and intends to become a Technology Education teacher.



Lisa Cuffari (Fox & Fox) recently enjoyed a one-week vacation in San Sebastian, Spain visiting her daughter and son-in-law. Lisa's daughter Elena is taking part in a 2-year research/teaching program at the University of The Basque Country, a post-doctorate position. Lisa says that her trip was wonderful, eye-opening, and an experience she will never forget. San Sebastian is on the northern coast of Spain, at the Bay of Biscay. They were able to visit a lovely coastal town in France, and spend a day in Pamplona, where the annual running-of-the-bulls takes place every July.



The holidays are coming quickly; there is soon to be news coming your way. Remember to take that camera with you, take a picture, and pass it along to me for the next issue of Hatches Matches and Dispatches.

Have a great holiday season and I wish everyone a prosperous new year. And with that, I say farewell for now.

Cindy Landis is the Office Administrator of Gennet Kallmann Antin & Robinson in Parsippany

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BY MARY ELLEN DOLAN AND LOUISE RUFFO



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Presenting our Business Partners

(Continued from page 39)



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Save the dates now to join us in Toronto, and watch your inbox and ALA social media outlets for more exciting conference details. Registration opens in November.

Gabrielle “Gabby” Giffords
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Presenting our Business Partners

(Continued from page 40)



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(Continued on page 43)

Presenting our Business Partners

(Continued from page 42)

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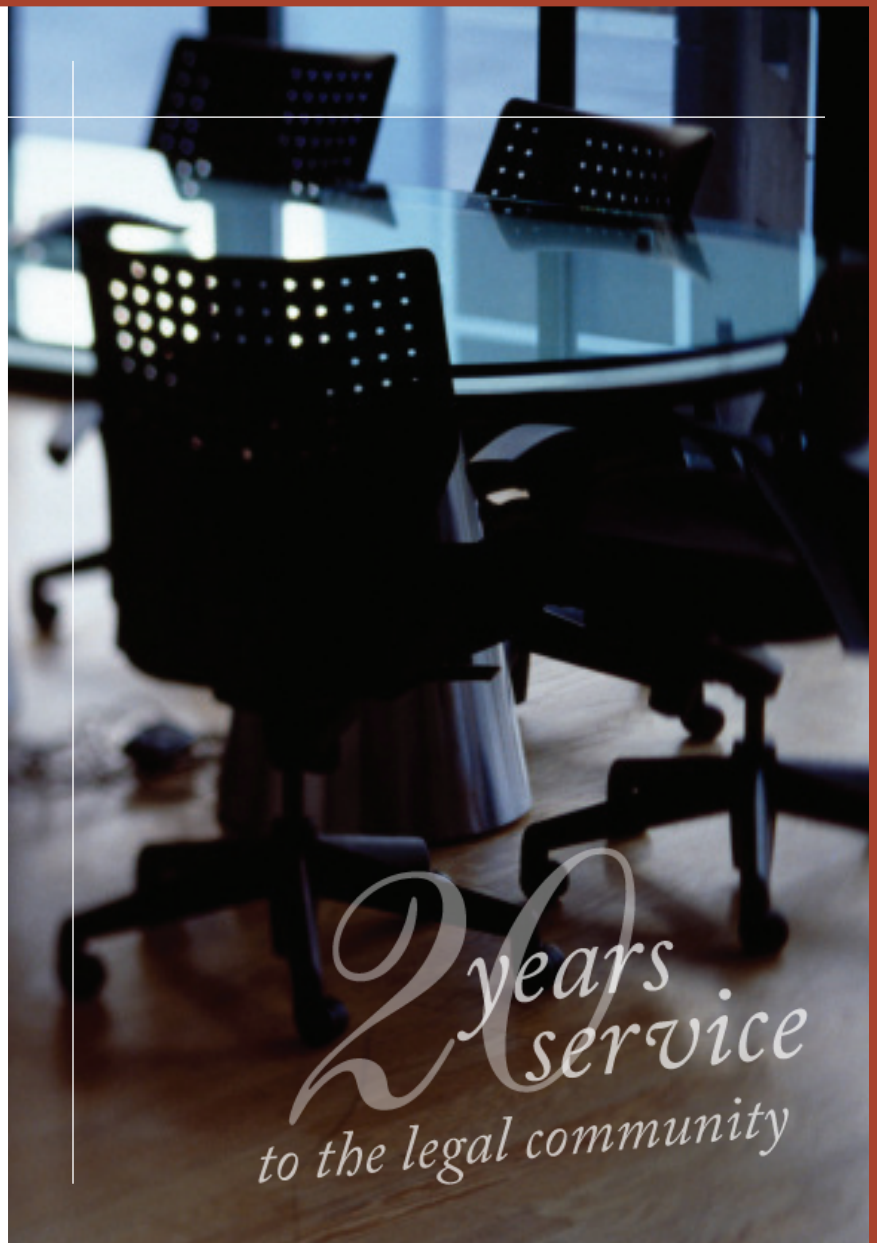
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