

2009-2010 CDWBA COMMITTEE DESCRIPTIONS

If members have questions on the roles of the different committees, please email or call Susan Taylor at suantaylor152@gmail.com or 518 474-2432.

AWARDS

This committee is responsible for informing members about awards being presented by local, state, and national bar associations, including WBASNY, and other entities and submitting nominations on behalf of the CDWBA for consideration. The committee's work involves identifying potential recipients and submitting the necessary forms. The committee also oversees obtaining nominations for CDWBA's awards and making recommendations to the Board.

BREAST CANCER

This committee is the Chapter's liaison to the Judges and Lawyers Breast Cancer Alert ("JALBCA"), the Breast Health Partnerships for Albany, Rensselaer and Schenectady Counties, and "To Life." The committee works with those groups to plan educational activities for the membership and the community in connection with the national October Breast Cancer Alert and other events throughout the year that feature topics related to breast cancer. Most importantly, the committee also provides information and support to members affected by the disease.

BY-LAWS

This committee is responsible for reviewing the Chapter's by-laws and proposing amendments where appropriate or when directed to do so by the Board.

CLASSROOM PROJECT

This committee coordinates with teachers of area elementary, middle, and high schools to place CDWBA members in a variety of classrooms. In this way, students hear members speak on what it is like to be a lawyer, about areas of practice and the kinds of community service lawyers partake in. Substantive areas of the law may also be addressed. This committee is also instrumental in

bringing the CARE program to students.

CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION

This committee organizes and presents a variety of CLEs throughout the year on a wide range of topics of interest to the legal community, and coordinates with WBASNY, as an accredited CLE provider, to obtain and properly administer CLE credit for attendees.

DIVERSITY AND GENDER FAIRNESS

This committee focuses on issues affecting the availability of career opportunities and the attainment of professional success and personal satisfaction for women in the legal profession, and works to increase the diversity of the CDWBA membership, leadership, and committees and to encourage minority women to enter the legal profession. The committee will examine whether, how, and why gender affects the quality and nature of an individual's experience in the legal system. The committee will also serve as the liaison between CDWBA and OCA gender fairness committees whose work affects the Capital Region.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

This committee serves as a forum to provide education to the membership about current information in the field of domestic violence, to work with the Legislative Committee to review legislation that would have an impact on victims of domestic violence, and to promote awareness about domestic violence among the membership and the public. It also provides a place for members who practice in the area of domestic violence representation to keep up to date on current issues and to share information.

FINANCIAL PLANNING:

This committee prepares an annual budget each fiscal year. The budget contains the expected expenses and income for the coming year and includes suggestions for fund raising activities. The committee consults with all committees to determine the financial needs of the organization. The CDWBA Treasurer generally chairs this committee.

JUDICIAL RECEPTION AND INSTALLATION DINNER

This committee plans an annual reception held each March to honor the Judges from the Court of Appeals, the Appellate Division, as well as local members of the Judiciary. It also helps to plan our June installation dinner of officers.

JUDICIAL SCREENING

This committee interviews and rates candidates for Supreme Court in the Third and Fourth Judicial Districts, and County level judgeships (Family, Surrogate and County Court) for Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady counties. The work of this committee is typically concluded by late October. The committee rates the candidates based on information obtained from a candidate questionnaire about their education and experience, a one (1) hour in-person interview, references provided by the candidates, and information obtained from the CDWBA membership and the legal community at large.

JUDICIAL TASK FORCE

This committee investigates the status of women in the Capital District Judiciary and explores avenues to increase the number of woman appointed and elected to the bench. The committee receives and analyzes reported incidents of inequitable treatment in the courts based on gender and determines

appropriate actions or makes referrals in furtherance of our mission to promote fairness in the courts.

LAW DAY

This committee coordinates the Chapter's participation in the annual Law Day (May 1) events. In the past, the Chapter has worked with the Albany County Bar Association to staff a free legal clinic in the Capital District and to encourage participation in the Law Day Run. The committee may plan additional programs for Law Day, as well.

LEGISLATIVE

This committee reviews proposed legislation pertaining to women's issues and New York legal practice, makes recommendations concerning such legislation to the Board, and reports CDWBA's position to the WBASNY Legislative Committee. The committee begins meeting in November and usually concludes with the end of the legislative session. The meetings are scheduled to coordinate with the four WBASNY Legislative Committee meetings in September, November, January, and March and, sometimes, April or May. This committee has long played an integral part in establishing the legislative agenda of WBASNY and has played a vital role in developing positions on important legislation under consideration by both Congress and the New York State Legislature.

MEMBERSHIP

This committee explores avenues to increase CDWBA membership to enhance the Association's presence in the legal community. Some of its traditional activities include organizing the annual membership party in December of each year, and sponsoring panel discussions and other events at Albany Law School, including a networking reception for law students. The committee also leads the CDWBA membership recruitment drive.

MENTORING

This committee implements WBASNY's "LINK" mentoring programming. The program is designed to provide law school student and recent graduates (protégés) a *link* to resources in the legal community. The goals of the program are to orient protégés to law firm or institutional culture; introduce professional expectations; assist less advantaged female professionals; and help protégés pave the way to a more satisfying and productive career. The mentoring program is NOT an internship program or a replacement for a career services organization. The committee's work starts each fall with a kick-off event at Albany Law School (currently a "speed mentoring" program). Protégés are then matched with volunteer mentors from the CDWBA for ongoing mentoring throughout the year. Committee members can be involved for the one-time-only kick-off event or by being matched with a protégé for an ongoing mentoring relationship.

NEWSLETTER

This committee consists of the newsletter editor and contributing committee chairs and members, and is the "lifeline" of CDWBA. Because a primary goal of the Newsletter is to familiarize the CDWBA membership with the organization's diverse committees and keep members informed as to what other members are doing, articles, information and ideas are always welcome from members.

PRO BONO/LEGAL PROJECT LIAISON

The Legal Project, Inc. is the pro bono arm of the CDWBA. This committee works closely with the Legal Project to recruit members for the various services provided by the Legal Project to those in need of pro bono or low-cost legal services in a variety of areas, including domestic violence. The committee also assists members in overcoming any impediments they may face to providing pro bono services.

PROGRAMMING

This committee arranges a variety of programs throughout the year, including luncheons, dinners, and other events designed to provide members with opportunities to network, learn about each other's work, and just have fun together. Program arrangements are coordinated with other Chapter committees as appropriate.

SOLE PRACTITIONERS/ SMALL FIRMS:

This committee will plan programs of interest to, and provide networking opportunities for, lawyers who practice solo or in small law firms in the Capital District.

TECHNOLOGY/INTERNET

This committee coordinates development and maintenance of our Chapter's web-site on the Internet, and also recommends ways to use the Net to interface with members. No computer experience necessary.

WOMEN IN GOVERNMENT:

This committee promotes the interests and opportunities of women attorneys in government through the sharing of practical and professional information with an emphasis on growing our membership and building a professional network. Members of this committee organize relevant, timely informational events for government attorneys, and intend to contribute regular topical submissions to the monthly newsletter.

WORKING MOTHERS:

This committee will undertake projects to address the special issues that affect parents working in the legal field, including a workplace survey relating to family friendly employment practices. This committee also works to increase dialogue about issues affecting working parents through a yahoo group and luncheons organized throughout the year.