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If you have any questions about the Alliance or would like to find out more about how to get involved, please contact Maureen Aidasani at maureen.aidasani@gt.com or Regine Corrado at regine.corrado@bakermckenzie.com

ALLIANCE NEWS

Newsletter of the Chicago Bar Association Alliance for Women
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Alliance-Girl Scouts “Law Track” Program Kicks Off

By *Maureen Aidasani and Diana Grote*

What does a corporate attorney do? Do judges still use gavels? How often does DNA really figure into criminal trials? These are among the myriad questions more than 35 Girl Scouts have posed to Chicago-area attorneys in the first sessions of the inaugural “Law Track” program, an innovative collaboration between the Alliance for Women and the Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana.

Perhaps one of the most exciting aspects of the Law Track program, in its pilot year, is that it has been developed with careful input from the girls themselves. Several teenage Scouts participated on the planning committee alongside Alliance for Women attorneys, and participants were selected for the pilot after completing thoughtful written applications about their interest in the program and the practice of law.

Girl Scout Diana Grote provides an excellent summary of the program: “Participants will attend up to five law-related sessions, hosted (primarily) at the offices of Navigant Consulting. The girls are interested in learning more about the court system and, possibly, going on to law school. The ages of the girls ranges from sixth grade to twelfth grade, and the girls come from all over Chicagoland. Meeting once or twice a month, the girls will participate in seminars on everything from ‘Law as Seen on TV’ to preparing for a mock trial case and presenting it in a real courtroom. This program provides many girls with exposure to this potential career, creates interest in the legal system, and encourages females in this male-dominated field of work.”

The series kicked off on January 31 with the “Law as Seen on TV” segment. Participants gathered in the boardroom of Navigant Consulting, viewed snippets of popular law-themed programs, including “The Good Wife,” “Harry’s Law,” and “Law and Order,” and listened as volunteer attorneys Jennifer Bruzan, Elizabeth Streit, and Marta Wasilewski helped the girls separate facts from fiction. Participants were extremely engaged, asked enthusiastic questions, and were very appreciative of the opportunity to learn about the law and meet “real life” attorneys.

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“I really liked learning about MANY DIFFERENT types of career choices in law.”

Three weeks later, momentum continued to build as participants reassembled at Navigant Consulting for a “Career Day” session. Ten female attorneys—with practices spanning the gamut from in-house corporate law to patent litigation to immigration law—introduced the girls to their own unique practices and participated in smaller breakout sessions that enabled the girls to interact more intensively with the volunteer attorneys. The girls were especially excited to meet and talk to longtime Alliance member and Illinois Appellate Court Justice Joy Cunningham, who graciously offered her insight and encouragement to the girls. The Alliance thanks all the dynamic attorneys who participated, including Kathryn Devine, Betsy Fahey, Alice Keane, Deepa Rajkarne, Jenifer Robbins, Mony Ruiz-Velasco, Kristina J. Wayne, and Anita Wilson.

The programming to come this spring will be just as exciting for the girls. On March 30, female law students with Northwestern Law School’s Women’s Leadership Coalition will host the “Law School Day” segment. The girls will enjoy a tour of the law school and

then settle in to hear an interactive panel of law students discuss their backgrounds, paths to law school, and dreams for their legal careers. The program will then culminate in May in a mock trial, and possibly an opportunity to participate in a community service project as part of the Women Everywhere: Partners in Service Project.

“I liked that we came to know each lawyer on a personal level.”

The Law Track program owes its success to the tireless leadership of the planning committee, spearheaded by Connie Willegal, Vice President of Program Strategy for the Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana, Monica Weed, General Counsel of Navigant Consulting and a Girl Scouts Board Member, and Regine Corrado, Co-Chair of the Alliance for Women.

If you are interested in becoming involved with the Law Track program, please contact regine.corrado@bakermckenzie.com.

Maureen Aidasani is Co-Chair of the Alliance for Women and Senior Counsel at Grant Thornton LLP. Diana Grote is a Girl Scout.

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Alliance News

Newsletter of the
CBA Alliance for Women

2010-2011 Committee

Cheryl Dancy Balough
cbalough@balough.com

Michele Jochner
mjochner@gmail.com

Susan Pipal
spipal@sbcglobal.net

Contributors

Maureen Aidasani
Cheryl Dancy Balough
Kristin Barnette
Rachel Fleischmann
Paula Galbraith
Diana Grote
Michele Jochner
Margot Klein
Sheila Nielsen

Design and Layout

Karen Highley
Chicago Bar Association

Please contact one of the Newsletter Committee members with any questions, comments or concerns about this newsletter.

Putting Your House In Order

By Michele M. Jochner

If something happens to you today, how would your family and your law practice be affected tomorrow? That was the powerful question posed by Elise Dixon, managing partner of Barclay, Dixon & Smith, P.C., to the attendees of a recent meeting of the Alliance for Women.

Dixon's presentation, "Putting Your House in Order," underscored that we must ponder this serious question *before* a catastrophe hits. Although we often counsel our clients to be proactive, unfortunately, we do not always practice what we preach when it comes to our own lives. Dixon's remarks caused the attendees to reflect on the state of their personal affairs and consider what must be done to assure that family and business interests will be protected in the event of illness, incapacitation and death. Dixon stressed that putting a plan in place ensures that your wishes will be carried out.

Dixon focused on three areas as basic starting points for estate planning: powers of attorney, guardianship, and wills and trusts.

Powers of Attorney

The Illinois Power of Attorney Act is found at 755 ILCS 45/1-1, *et seq.*, and was enacted in 1987. The General Assembly has amended this Act pursuant to Public Act 96-1195, and these changes will be effective July 1, 2011. According to Dixon, the amendments are intended to provide clarification, additional structure and tighter standards with regard to the grant of power authorized under these documents.

Dixon explained that there are two types of power of attorney: for property and for healthcare. A power of attorney for property grants authority to an agent to make business decisions on your behalf, including banking and the sale of property. A power of attorney for healthcare permits the agent to make medical decisions on your behalf, including provision for life support. For either power of attorney, you should designate not only an agent, but also a successor agent. Dixon emphasized that this selection must be carefully made and cautioned against automatically appointing children to serve in this role. The touchstone for selecting an agent is that the person you choose is one whom you trust to carry out your wishes.

Guardianship

If you become incapacitated before you execute a power of attorney, a guardianship may ensue. Guardianships are governed by the Illinois Probate Act (755 ILCS 5/11a-1 *et seq.*), which provides that anyone over the age of 18 who has not committed a felony may serve as a guardian, and notice is given to all family members. In order to protect the ward's estate if the guardian misuses the funds, a guardian must be bonded. In addition, a guardian must also prepare an annual budget and an accounting. Although a guardianship provides protection, decisions regarding your family and business become matters for the court. Dixon also noted that a guardianship can be very expensive.

Wills and Trusts

Once a power of attorney is executed, Dixon cautioned that it remains valid only during lifetime and expires upon death. This underscores the importance of having a plan in place to deal with family and business issues after death.

One option is to execute a will, which provides a roadmap to follow after death. If a person has assets of \$100,000 or more, an estate must be opened and it proceeds through the probate process. In order to give creditors time to file claims, the estate must remain open for at least six months. Dixon reminded the attendees that a will is a "public" document, to the extent that it must be filed with the court as part of the probate proceedings. Although wills can be contested, Dixon stated that it is very difficult to prove undue influence upon the testator at the time the document was executed. If one dies without a will—or intestate—the assets will be distributed according to the applicable statutes.

Dixon noted that another option is a revocable living trust, which is essentially a contract between the grantor and the trustee. Unlike a will, a living trust is a private document. The trust outlines what happens if a person becomes incapacitated, and it provides for distribution of assets upon death. The trust becomes effective upon execution by the trust maker, and, in order to avoid probate, the trust must be "funded," meaning that the

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Effective Self-Marketing and Branding

By Cheryl Dancey Balough and
Paula Galbraith

On February 22, more than 50 Alliance for Women members attended a half-day program presented by the Women's Leadership Institute (WLI). WLI co-chairs Alyse Lasser, President of Insight Executive Search Partners, and Jennifer Bluestein, Director of Attorney Professional Development at Greenberg Traurig LLP, organized three interactive panels to address different aspects of "Advancing Your Career: Effective Self-Marketing and Branding."

Developing an Effective Bio. In the first session, panelists Kristina Anderson, President of Anderson Legal Search; Alyse Lasser; and Deborah Salekaris, President of Rodas Coaching, focused on how to develop an effective bio. Lawyers' bios are generally used in five ways: speaking engagements, firm websites, social media, ranking groups, and the hiring process. Unlike a resume, the bio tells a story, not a chronology of facts. It serves a promotional function and is not just a job search tool. It also reaches all audiences, as opposed to being tailored for a specific position of interest or job opening.

An effective bio needs to pop and convey the essence of who you are. The first paragraph should answer the question: Why do people hire me? The bio must



include good details about what you do and for whom. A law firm might have a specific format that you must follow for your bio, but you can deviate from that format

and show more personality with the information you place on social media sites like LinkedIn. However, bios, information on social media

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assets must be placed into the name of the trust. A revocable trust may be amended or revoked at any time.

Case Study

To underscore her points, Dixon engaged in an interactive case study with the audience. Dixon used the hypothetical of a 50-year-old partner in a law firm who suffers a stroke, and, as a result, is unable to take care of herself or practice law. This attorney is divorced with two children: an 18-year-old daughter who is in college and a 15-year-old son. Assuming that this attorney has not executed any power of attorney, Dixon asked the attendees to list the major issues raised by this scenario.

The audience agreed that, first and foremost, there is uncertainty as to who will have the authority to make decisions for the incapacitated lawyer regarding herself, her family and her practice. Also, the question arose of who will care for the minor child and the financial impact upon the family as a whole. In addition, numerous questions were raised in regards to the law practice. Dixon stressed that

this exercise highlighted only a few of the serious issues presented and showed the critical need to plan for the future, including consideration of long-term care and disability insurance, as well as the inclusion of provisions in the law firm partnership agreement to deal with the incapacity of a principal of the firm. Because this attorney did not execute a power of attorney prior to her illness, a guardian would likely be appointed, and that person must follow the orders of the court, which may not necessarily mirror the wishes of the ward.

Dixon then took her hypothetical one step further and asked the audience to assume that the attorney's condition deteriorates and ends in death. At the time of her passing, the attorney has a net estate of \$500,000, but the law practice owes \$150,000 in debt. She also has a \$1,000,000 life insurance policy which is payable to her children. However, she did not leave a will and did not execute a living trust.

Again, serious issues

are presented. Who will be the administrator of her estate? Conceivably, it could be her ex-husband or her 18-year-old daughter. Would this be what the attorney wanted? In addition, what happens to the law practice upon her death, and how much of the firm's debt is her estate responsible for? Further, who becomes the guardian of the minor child's estate, and will the older daughter use her inheritance for college or spend it frivolously? All of these questions would have definite answers had the attorney adequately planned for the future.

Dixon concluded by stressing that it is essential for each of us to "put our house in order" sooner rather than later. By doing so, we remain in control of what happens to our family and practice, and we ensure that they will be taken care of in accordance with our wishes.

Michele M. Jochner is a judicial law clerk to Justice Charles E. Freeman of the Illinois Supreme Court and a co-chair of the Alliance Newsletter Committee.

Gift Card Drive to Assist Domestic Victims a Great Success!

By Rachel Fleischmann

This year's Alliance for Women Domestic Violence Task Force & Advocacy Committee winter gift card drive raised over \$1,550 in gift cards and cash donations combined. All of the proceeds will help women and children escaping domestic violence and seeking shelter at

Connections for Abused Women and their Children. Women fleeing violent homes often arrive at the shelter with only the clothes on their backs. The donated gift cards will empower women and allow them to buy the clothing, toiletries, and other supplies they need in order to start rebuilding their lives. The Domestic Violence Task Force

& Advocacy Committee co-chairs, Margot Klein and Rachel Fleischmann, thank everyone for their generous contributions.

Rachel Fleischmann is a co-chair of the Alliance's Domestic Violence Task Force & Advocacy Committee.

sites, and resumes should be consistent with each other. It's also important to keep all of these tools up to date.

After discussing the purpose of a bio and what it should contain, the panel evaluated what made the bios of four Alliance members in attendance effective. As part of that evaluation, the panelists discussed what makes a good photo to accompany the bio. The photo should convey a professional image through hair, dress, and chosen jewelry. Your photo should project energy and help you achieve an emotional connection with the viewer by making you look serious but also engaging and approachable. The photo makes an important first impression.

Creating and Living Your Business Plan. The second session of the day focused on the importance of, and the steps involved in, developing a business plan. Jennifer Bluestein and Aleen Bayard, President of MarketZing, emphasized that your business plan must be tailored to what you want to achieve.

This practical, interactive session helped the attendees walk away with five outcomes: (1) an understanding of marketing best practices, (2) completion of a personal marketing and career management SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis, (3) identification of one's competitive advantages, (4) a determination of marketing priorities, and (5) recognition of how to leverage firm and professional

resources.

As the attendees worked on their plans, they completed a mini-self-assessment. They also generated a relationship inventory, which enabled them to identify the people who could contribute to potential business generation. The participants then developed their own strategies with up to five goals. Finally, each woman committed herself to her own SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, results-oriented, time-specific) action plan – with the aim of completing one short-term and one long-term action step each month.

Best Kept Secrets of Successful Rainmaking. The third session of the program included a question and answer session with two successful rainmakers. Susan Benton, Partner at Winston & Strawn, and Paula Litt, Partner at Schopf & Weiss, provided tips on how to grow business from existing clients and how to win new clients.

They emphasized the importance of developing relationships with ongoing clients. Personal interaction with each client is critical, such as keeping in touch with him or her even when you are not actively working on the client's matters. Integrate contact with your clients into your schedule, finding an excuse to reach out to them. For example, call clients to let them know that you will be near their office, and offer to take them out to lunch. At the same time, be aware when it is time to let a bad client go so that you can focus your energy

on the good clients.

Ms. Litt and Ms. Benson also encouraged program attendees to learn about potential new clients. Do your homework to know what they need. Listen. Then make sure that you communicate that you know them, understand their needs, and can give them what they need. Finally, ask for their business. Women have a tendency to be passive when asking for work. If you don't ask for someone's business, however, the potential client will likely think that you don't want the business. Be direct.

Alliance members who attended this half-day program walked away with many good strategies and tips on how to advance their careers. Many thanks to the Women's Leadership Institute for organizing this informative and practical program.

Cheryl Dancey Balough is a principal of Balough Law Offices, LLC, and a co-chair of the Alliance Newsletter Committee. Paula Galbraith is a principal of Galbraith, Palmatier & Associates, LLP and a co-chair of the Alliance Programming Committee.

Share Your Love of the Legal Profession with the Girl Scouts

The Alliance's 2010-11 initiative with the Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwestern Indiana, Women Legal Track Program, has two wonderful activities planned for April and May – and we need your expertise and involvement! Thirty Girl Scouts are looking forward to “Take a Girl Scout to Work Day” on April 28. The Alliance is looking for volunteers from all walks of the legal profession to host a young woman or two at their place of work for a portion or all of that day.

Please contact Alliance co-chairs Regine Corrado at regine.corrado@bakermckenzie.com or Maureen Aidasani at maureen.aidasani@us.gt.com for more information or to sign up.

On May 3 and 7, the Girl Scouts will take part in a mock trial. They will prepare on Tuesday, May 3, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., and then participate in a trial itself on Saturday, May 7. The young women are enthusiastically looking forward to this event. Please volunteer a couple of hours on either that Tuesday or

Saturday to help the Girl Scouts prepare for and participate in an adrenaline-filled mock trial. This event will be the culmination of the Girl Scouts' five-month exploration of the legal profession. To learn more or get involved, please contact Esther Chang at esther.chang@bakermckenzie.com or Regine Corrado at regine.corrado@bakermckenzie.com

Upcoming Alliance Events

Look for emails with more details about these upcoming Alliance for Women programs:

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|-------------------------|---|
| April 14, 2011, Evening | From the Corner Office to the Boardroom to the Bench: Women Leaders in Law Share Experiences on Paths to Success |
| April 19, 2011, Noon | Balancing Love, Work, the Law & Family (Joint Program with the YLS at the CBA) |
| April 26, 2011, Noon | Sexual Assault Awareness Month Program (at the CBA) |
| April 28, 2011 | Take a Girl Scout to Work Day – volunteers needed |
| May 7, 2011 | Alliance-Girl Scouts Legal Track – Mock Trial |
| May 11, 2011, Noon | Alliance Awards Luncheon (at the Standard Club) |
| Spring 2011 | Networking Event with the Illinois CPA Society Women's Initiatives Task Force |
| June 17, 2011 | Women Everywhere Agency Projects Day |
| July 19, 2011, Noon | Women's Leadership Institute Call to Action: Breaking the Glass Ceiling and 2010 Call to Action Results (at Jenner & Block) |

Charting a Successful Career in the Law

Part II: Know What Is Expected of You as a Lawyer

By Sheila Nielsen

From the minute you start your career, you want to hit the ground running. Many newly minted lawyers working at law firms complain that they do not get to work with clients. But, in fact, new associates do have clients: they are the partners they work for. Like all lawyers who work with clients, new associates need to create trust, do their very best work, and please their partner-clients. The job of the new associate is to be the expert on the law or other topic. Believe it or not, the partner needs the new associate to get all over the assigned topic and become the expert the partner can rely on for accurate information.

These days, associates need to set their own goals for performance development and find ways to get the experience they need to advance. Many associates do not realize that the firm will not do that for them and are disappointed when they receive less than stellar reviews because they are missing certain skills they were supposed to have developed. Who knew? You will need to find mentors on your own. Even if the firm has a mentoring program, it is a good idea to find additional supportive partners for different purposes and touch base with them when questions arise, being careful not to become a pest.

Eventually, to succeed in the private practice of law these days, lawyers have to bring in business. In general, this is not an expectation for about five to seven years, but the groundwork for business development has to be laid in the early years of practice. Business development is friendship and trust relationships with potential referral sources. That includes other lawyers both within and outside the firm who might refer business.

By mid-career (about seven to ten years into the practice of law) you will want to be a presence in the legal world. That means you join bar associations and write and speak so that other lawyers know who you are and recognize your niche practice area. It is also essential that you create a spotless reputation for doing good work in an ethical way and that you work well with opposing counsel. What goes around comes around. Lawyers who create animosity and enemies often find out too late that their legal neighborhood is very small and that gossip abounds. A high degree of professionalism goes a long way.

In a lawyer's later career, it makes a difference if he or she can play well with others. You do not want to be the partner from hell. If you develop a reputation for being impossible to work with,

your options for career growth and movement to a different workplace are limited.

All too often, partners have a problem with delegation to junior partners and associates. They hold on to work and/or become micro-managers for fear the work will not be done properly. By doing so, they run into time constraints and overcharging issues. If a partner can teach and train support staff to do their jobs the right way from the beginning, delegation should become easier. The effort to teach and train the next generation of lawyers coming through the pipeline has to be adopted as a "best practice" despite being time consuming in the beginning. It saves time in the long run.

In the next edition of the newsletter, I will write about career traps that can derail your long-term success as a lawyer and how to avoid or overcome them.

Sheila Nielsen is an executive coach and career counselor. If you wish to receive CLE credit, you can view her video course at www.mentorcle.com/courses/?course. Or visit Sheila's website at www.nielsencareerconsulting.com.

“Together, WE Can Make a Difference”

Women Everywhere: Partners in Service Project

By Kristin Barnette

The Women Everywhere: Partners in Service Project, Inc. (WE), is a volunteer collective aimed at soliciting and coordinating volunteer activities benefiting women and children in need, with a particular focus on education and community service. The WE Project will host its annual Educational Projects Day on Friday, April 15, 2011. The Educational Projects Day invites junior and senior students from local high schools to attend seminars, participate in mock trials, tour trial and appellate courts, and listen to the remarkable experiences of accomplished professional women. Several hundred students participate in the program every year. Among the court locations are the Dirksen Federal Courthouse, the Richard J. Daley Center, the Domestic Violence Courthouse, the Criminal Courts Building at 26th and California in Chicago, and the courthouses in Markham and Maywood. This annual event seeks to expose high school women to the importance of education, along with the many rewarding career paths that might follow. With the volunteer help of numerous judges and attorneys, Educational Projects Day activities will focus on the 2011 WE theme: Pioneering Women - from the fields of Public Service, Law, Sports and Science.

WE's Agency Projects Day will take place on June 17, 2011. This volunteer event brings together several hundred individuals from the legal community to spend the day at dozens of agencies dedicated to the needs of women and children. The volunteers provide direct services such as painting, building, gardening, or cleaning, as well as legal services such as leading discussions with agency clients and presenting topical seminars. Volunteering some or all of the day at a community service agency provides assistance where it is needed most. It also is a great opportunity to bring a friend and introduce her or him to community organizations and the work that they do.

To organize and coordinate these events, WE has an extensive Planning Committee comprised of a coalition of bar group partners and individual volunteers from the legal community. WE's partners include the Chicago Bar Association Alliance for Women, the Black Women Lawyers Association of Greater Chicago, Diversity Scholarship Foundation, Illinois Association of Defense Trial Counsel, Illinois Judges Foundation, Illinois Judicial Council, Illinois State Bar Association Committee on Women and the Law, Illinois Trial Lawyers Association, John Marshall Law School Alumni Association, Lesbian and Gay Bar Association of Chicago, Women's Bar Association

of Illinois, and Women's Criminal Defense Bar Association. WE is grateful for the generosity and support of not only its bar group partners, but also for the backing of numerous Chicago area law firms as well.

Volunteers drive the success of WE. By contributing time and energy, WE volunteers help make the future brighter for women and children. Alliance for Women members can volunteer individually on April 15, 2011, for our Educational Projects Day or on June 17, 2011, for Agency Projects Day. Alliance members will also volunteer as a group at a participating WE agency on Agency Projects Day. To complete a volunteer form, go to <http://www.wechicago.org>, or send an e-mail to Martina Brendel at martina.brendel@gmail.com or Sarah Buck at sbuck0427@gmail.com. For more information about these events or partnering your firm with WE, please visit our website or contact Women Everywhere Planning Committee Co-Chairs Marcia Maras at marciamaras@aol.com or Arleen Anderson at acanderson11@comcast.net. Together, we can make a difference!

Kristin Barnette is on the board of directors of the Women's Bar Association of Illinois and a senior associate at Parrillo, Weiss & O'Halloran.

An Overview of Bankruptcy Protection for Survivors of Domestic Violence

By Margot Klein

On February 17, 2011, the Alliance for Women's Domestic Violence Task Force and Advocacy Committee provided a free seminar on bankruptcy for the staff and clients of Between Friends, a service provider for survivors of domestic violence. Panelists included A. Benjamin Goldgar, U.S. Bankruptcy Judge for the Northern District of Illinois; Karen R. Goodman, shareholder of Shefsky & Froelich, Ltd.; Keisha Hooks, staff attorney for the Office of Ch. 13 Trustee Marilyn O. Marshall; and David Yen, supervisory attorney for the Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago. The seminar provided a comprehensive bankruptcy primer understandable to the nonlawyer audience. Judge Goldgar began the presentation with an overview of the bankruptcy process, explaining key concepts such as the bankruptcy estate, the discharge of debts and the automatic stay, and stressing the need for honesty and forthrightness with the court. Ms. Goodman gave an overview of Chapter 7 relief, explaining the role of a Chapter 7 trustee, one that she has fulfilled in numerous cases. Ms. Hooks then discussed Chapter 13 relief and the corresponding rights

and obligations resulting from that process. Thereafter, Mr. Yen distinguished Chapter 7 and Chapter 13 actions and led the panel's discussion regarding the practical considerations involved in determining whether and how to file for bankruptcy protection.

Between Friends is a nonprofit agency dedicated to breaking the cycle of domestic violence and abuse through education, support, counseling and advocacy services. This seminar was one of several projects that the Alliance's Domestic Violence Task Force & Advocacy Committee has coordinated for Between Friends. To become more involved with the Domestic Violence Task Force & Advocacy Committee, please contact Rachel Fleischmann at rfleischmann@atg.state.il.us or Margot Klein at margot.klein@comcast.net.

Margot Klein is a co-chair of the Alliance's Domestic Violence Task Force & Advocacy Committee and a past co-chair of the Alliance for Women.

Alliance Committee Chairs

To participate in an Alliance committee, please contact one of the chairs:

Domestic Violence Task Force/ Advocacy Committee

Rachel Fleischmann
rfleischmann@atg.state.il.us
Margot Klein
margot.klein@comcast.net

Annual Luncheon

Esther Chang
esther.chang@bakermckenzie.com
Sandy Morris
smorris@chiconunes.com

Cross-Career Networking

Hon. Rebecca Pallmeyer
Tracy O'Flaherty
tracy_o'flaherty@baxter.com
Sasha Reyes
sasha.reyes@bakermckenzie.com
Jennifer Robbins
jrobbins@fpladvisorygroup.com

Holiday Party

Liz Epstein
esepstein@gmail.com
Kari Sheinfeld
kari.b.sheinfeld@jpmchase.com

Membership

Catherine Long
cing2006@yahoo.com
Ginger Wilson
ginger.wilson@legalquestllc.com

Mentoring Circles

Mary Curry
marykcurry@gmail.com
Rachael Pontikes
rgpontikes@duanemorris.com

Programming

Paula Galbraith
pgalbraith@gprlegal.com
Jennifer Kraft
jkraft@seyfarth.com

Women's Leadership Institute

Jennifer Bluestein
bluesteinj@gtlaw.com
Alyse Lasser
alasser@insightsearch.net