

# In Motion

ASSOCIATION  
FOR  
WOMEN LAWYERS

January 2012

## CLE Program

# E-Discovery: Something Wicked This Way Comes

Thursday, January 26

Noon to 1:30 p.m.

**Whyte Hirschboeck Dudek**

555 E. Wells St., Suite 1900, Milwaukee

AWL's Litigation Discussion Group is sponsoring this CLE program,  
and all AWL members are invited to attend!

The presenters, both from Gonzalez Saggio & Harlan, LLP, are **Jean-Marie Feedham**, partner and co-chair of the E-Discovery Practice Group, and **Anique Ruiz**, associate and member of the E-Discovery Practice Group. The program will include a discussion of the preservation, collection, and production of electronically stored information and how to keep your firm and its clients protected and informed to avoid costly sanctions for non-compliance.

There is no cost for the program, but space is limited so register soon.  
Contact Dawn Drellos-Thompson at 262-641-8812 or [ddrellos@pdlawgroup.com](mailto:ddrellos@pdlawgroup.com).

## Upcoming AWL Meetings & Special Events

### **WisBar Town Hall Meeting**

Monday, January 23  
Noon-1:15 p.m.  
*Quarles & Brady*

### **CLE Program E-Discovery**

Thursday, January 26  
Noon-1:30 p.m.  
*Whyte Hirschboeck Dudek*

### **Mentoring Workshop for MU Law Students**

Thursday, February 9  
6-8 p.m.  
*Marquette University*

### **Mentor Forum**

Wednesday, February 15  
6-8 p.m.  
*Marquette University*

### **Women Judges' Night**

Keynote speaker *Margaret Raymond*  
Tuesday, March 27  
5-9 p.m.  
*Italian Community Center*



# What's Going On

## Estate Planning Discussion Group

The next meeting of the AWL Estate Planning Discussion Group will be **Wednesday, January 18** at noon. The topic is "The Power of Roth", presented by AWL member Linda Grady, of Merrill Lynch. The meeting will be held at Godfrey & Kahn, 780 N. Water St., 17th Floor. Parking is available off of Wells St under M&I Customer Parking, and will be validated.

Meetings are brown bag sessions, so please bring your lunch and your questions. Guests are welcome! Please RSVP to Jennifer Olk at [jolk@gklaw.com](mailto:jolk@gklaw.com).

## Town Hall Meeting

AWL members are invited to a town hall meeting with State Bar President Jim Brennan on **Monday, January 23**. President Brennan will speak about the benefits of the State Bar and answer questions about the

Bar. The meeting will be held at Quarles & Brady, 411 E. Wisconsin Ave., from noon-1:15 p.m. Lunch will be provided, and there is no cost. RSVP to [natalie.remington@quarles.com](mailto:natalie.remington@quarles.com) by Wednesday, January 18.

## Mentoring Events

Our annual Mentoring Workshop for MULS students will be held on **Thursday, February 9** from 6-8 p.m. at Marquette University. The follow-up In-

teractive Mentor Forum will be held on **Wednesday, February 15** from 6-8 p.m. For details, see page 3.

## MULS PILS Auction

Marquette University Law School's Public Interest Law Society will host its 19th Annual Howard B. Eisenberg Do-Gooders' Auction on **Friday, February 10** at 5:30 p.m. Tickets are \$40. For more information, see the article on page 3.

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## Member Profile

**Maria Gonzalez Knavel**



By Paula Davis-Laack

The law is Maria's second career, but a passion for working with people in the health care industry is in Maria's blood. Maria was born in the Dominican Republic and her father, a doctor, began his medical practice there. After moving the family to the United

States, her dad received additional training and continued his practice. Maria earned her bachelor's degree in health planning and administration and then managed a medical clinic after she graduated. After 12 years, she wanted to pursue a post-graduate degree and, after briefly considering medical school, chose instead to pursue a career in the law.

During law school, Maria was a summer associate at Foley & Lardner, and she's been there ever since. As a health care attorney, she understands that her work prior to law school gives her a unique advantage in that she's able to understand client issues not only from a legal perspective but also from a practical one.

In addition to being a busy partner at a large law firm, Maria works with a number of organizations in the Milwaukee area. She has been on the Board of Directors of the Children's Outing Association (COA) since 2004. The COA provides youth and family education and services to low income families. In addition Maria is on the Milwaukee Zoological Society Board, which creates educational outreach efforts aimed at children of diverse

populations who traditionally have not used the zoo. Maria is also a community member on the Children's Hospital Institutional Review Board, where she provides a parent's perspective toward review of proposed clinical trials. AWL recently recognized Maria's service to the community by choosing her as the recipient of the 2010 AWL Community Involvement Award.

Of keen awareness to Maria is the fact that about 50% of law school graduates are women, yet the majority of women who start as associates in large law firms do not become partners. Maria sees this as a large detriment to the practice of law in large law firms, calling it a "brain drain." Maria feels that she's been able to maintain her longevity in a big firm due in large part to the people she works with on the health care team. Their sense of teamwork and willingness to support each other provides her with tremendous work and emotional support.

In addition, she believes that organizations like AWL are vital avenues of support and networking for new attorneys in particular. She cites balancing work and life as one of the biggest hurdles for women in the legal profession.

In order to create a sustainable pace, she acknowledges that she shifts which priorities come first – work or home – daily.

Maria encourages young attorneys to give serious thought to how they want to practice. New attorneys need to take into account what's important to them, their values, and their personality style. In addition, the practice of law has not escaped the challenges of this tough economy. Instead of being discouraged, recent graduates should explore career opportunities outside traditional practice where their law degrees are valued.

Maria says that every phase of life has different challenges, and you need to be a strong woman if you're going to be a lawyer – this is not a profession for the weak-hearted.

Maria is most proud of her two children. Her daughter is a recent medical school graduate and her son is a finance graduate, currently enjoying an internship with the Milwaukee Brewers. In addition to spending time with her children, Maria loves to read and scuba dive.

## Annual Mentoring Events

It's time again for our annual mentoring events, including a Mentoring Workshop on Thursday, February 9 for our student members and the Interactive Mentor Forum on Wednesday, February 15. As always, it is the participation of our members as volunteer mentors that make these events a great success!

### Mentoring Workshop

The Mentoring Workshop will feature discussions on how women in the legal profession particularly benefit from mentoring. Our speakers will share stories and strategies about how to find, contact and respond to mentors and what to expect. They will advise our student members how to best utilize mentoring at each stage of law school and throughout a legal career.

The workshop is a unique and important opportunity for

student members to learn about the benefits of mentoring and is excellent preparation for the main event, the Interactive Mentoring Forum ("speed dating" event).

### Interactive Mentor Forum

The Interactive Mentor Forum has been described as "speed dating" because volunteer AWL mentors – in pairs or a small group – are chosen to discuss a particular topic, and students rotate to visit each discussion group. While conversations are brief, the goal is to introduce students to mentors so that our participants can gain insight in each group and then make further contact later based on the students' individual interests.

Members in all practice areas and nontraditional legal careers are strongly encouraged to participate. Please consider being a

part of this important event for our student members.

Our Forum conversation groups cover a wide variety of topics, including work/family balance, opportunities in nontraditional legal careers, practicing in a big firm, marketing and other challenges of solo practitioners and lawyers practicing in small firms, how to handle career transitions, and rainmaking. There is no obligation for volunteer mentors to follow-up, but often the best outcomes are based on contacts made after the formal event.

### Looking for "Rookies" Too

We are also looking for attorneys with less than five years of experience to be partnered with more experienced attorneys during the Interactive Forum. Your participation as mentors provides a distinct and beneficial perspective for students, and

you will undoubtedly pick up some great advice and make connections with other volunteer mentors as well.

Please consider participating as a mentor in the Interactive Forum on February 15 at Marquette University Law School. There is no charge to participate in this event. Starting at 6 p.m., we will have complimentary hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar for a casual cocktail hour. At 6:30 we will have brief introductions and instructions for the conversation rotation groups and conversation group rotations, the "speed dating," will begin at 6:45.

To participate as a volunteer mentor, or for more details, contact Elizabeth Champeau at [Elizabeth\\_Champeau@wied.uscourts.gov](mailto:Elizabeth_Champeau@wied.uscourts.gov). We hope you will help make the AWL Mentoring Events a success!

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## Leaders in Law, Leaders in Service

## MULS Public Interest Law Society

By Vintee Sawhney

Marquette University Law School's Public Interest Law Society (PILS) is getting ready to host its 19th Annual Howard B. Eisenberg Do-Gooders' Auction next month, and Elizabeth Brodek, this year's Auction co-chair (and Vice-President of Marquette's Association of Women Lawyers), is gearing up for an event that truly embraces the spirit of public interest law.

PILS, a student-run organization, is dedicated to educating law students about public interest work by making them aware of public interest opportunities, providing community service

opportunities, and enhancing public opinion of the legal profession throughout the Midwest. In addition, Elizabeth and other members of the executive board run the PILS Fellowship Program, which provides stipends to students who work as summer interns at public interest agencies where they are not otherwise compensated. For students interested in such work, PILS provides an opportunity to pursue their passions for meaningful and important work while balancing the realities of life, such as rent, bills and tuition.

While the practical purpose of the auction is to raise funds for deserving students, the event is

much more. Elizabeth explains the importance of the PILS Auction as a forum to bring lawyers, students and law professors together to understand and recognize the broad impact of their work. Inspired by the legacy of the late Dean Eisenberg, whose passion and dedication to public service was evident throughout his career and who brought the importance of public service to Marquette University Law School, the PILS Auction is held in his honor, with a reminder to do well and do good.

Organizing an event on such a scale requires time, creativity and energy, and a special group of students to take on such a

responsibility. For Elizabeth, who has been a PILS Fellow and involved with PILS since her 1L year, assuming the co-chair role was a natural decision. Not only does she have many creative ideas to continue to shape the annual auction, but she finds satisfaction in seeing others benefit from her actions. Her commitment to PILS is evident as she focuses on the variety of reasons why people are drawn to the organization, whether it is pro bono, government or legal aid work. As a leader of the organization, Elizabeth praises PILS members as some of the most dedicated members of any student organization. There is

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# Thoughts from the President

## Finding Your Voice

“A woman with a voice is by definition a strong woman. But the search to find that voice can be remarkably difficult. It’s complicated by the fact that in most nations women receive substantially less education than men.”

*Melinda Gates*

By definition we are lucky. We all have law degrees and, thus, had access to a legal education. These degrees are the same whether we are a man or a woman. But we would be foolish to think that these degrees grant us equal recognition in the legal profession.

The fact is that many women, including myself, have had to work to find our own voice in this male-dominated profession. Maybe this is because, as little girls, we are encouraged to be sweet and agreeable. We are often raised to be nurturers and, for some inexplicable reason, we are taught that nurturers are not fighters and do not speak out of turn. But finding your own voice is important. Without it, it is unlikely you will be in this profession for long – or at least that you will be happy and successful in it.

But how do you find your own voice? Here are some suggestions I have gathered over my years of practicing.

First, fake it if you have to. There will be times, particularly as a new lawyer, when you will know you need to speak up and take control. This might be in a trial, a deposition or when preparing a witness. Remember that your job as a lawyer is to

be a leader and an advocate. If you do not do this on behalf of yourself or your client, who will?

I distinctly recall the morning of my first trial. I had been practicing law for a little over six months. I was second chairing the trial, but I was definitely not a silent second chair. I had prepared a number of the witnesses and was going to be examining them in open court, before a jury. The first day of trial, I was so nervous I could not eat breakfast. Fortunately lead counsel – AWL member Kelly Centofanti – convinced me otherwise. I choked down peanut butter toast.

You can imagine my nerves on the way to the courthouse. But when it came time for me to perform, something in me changed. As far as the jury and the judge knew, I had been trying cases for years. And so I figured, I might as well act as though I had. I still recall that trial and Kelly’s confidence in me with much fondness (we won, in case you are wondering). It was that trial that convinced me I could be a good litigator.

My second suggestion is to speak with the expectation that your voice will be heard. Over the nine years I have been practicing law, I have observed a critical difference between how men and women often approach court, depositions and client meetings. A number of my colleagues, particularly my male colleagues, walk into the room expecting to be heard. As a result, instead of quietly sitting

at the table taking copious notes, they speak up and say something.

How many times have you walked out of a hearing, deposition or meeting thinking “I should have said something?” But, because you waited for an invitation that never came, or you second guessed whether what you had to say was worth saying, you remained silent. Obviously, there are times when remaining silent is appropriate, but we do ourselves a disservice by always waiting for an invitation to speak instead of simply speaking, or by questioning whether what we have to say is worth saying. You are intelligent. If you feel the need to say something, it is likely worth saying.

Lastly, recognize that you may have to speak up a number of times before people realize that you are speaking. I have never thought of myself as a particularly shy person. Reserved, maybe. But shy, no. Yet, I was surprised to learn that one of my male colleagues thought of me as shy to the point that he questioned whether I would be comfortable in the courtroom. This was of particular surprise to me given that much of my legal experience came through the courtroom, depositions and other trial work. I realized at that moment that this individual did not truly know me and my skills.

The only way I was going to correct this erroneous perception was to continue to do what I had done for so many years prior – conduct hearings, trials



and depositions. This summer I successfully first chaired a jury trial resulting in a rather substantial award. I think it would be difficult now for anyone to say with credibility that I am too shy for the courtroom. Regardless of whether it was appropriate in the first instance for me to have faced this criticism, the fact is that I did and I overcame it. But I only did so by continuing to speak up – in this instance, by demonstrating the trial skills I always knew I had.

Finding your own voice can be a challenge, especially when you are just starting to cultivate your legal skills. But it is important to do so. If you need help along the way, I encourage you to turn to AWL. We have a number of members who are wonderful mentors and are more than willing to assist you in finding your voice.

In early February, you’ll receive your 2012 Member Directory in the mail. In the back section, we list members who have expressed a willingness to serve as mentors. Take a look, and contact someone who seems like a good fit. And, as always, my door is certainly open.

*Natalie Romington*

## PILS, cont.

no doubt that Elizabeth and her fellow executive board members lead by example.

The Public Interest Law Society will continue to maintain its Fellowship Program by hosting the 19th Annual Howard B. Esienberg Do-Gooders' Auction. This year, the auction will be held at Eckstein Hall, the new home of Marquette University Law School, providing an opportunity for alumni and members of the Marquette community to enjoy and explore this exceptional institution. Additionally, there are a myriad of exciting items in the silent and live auctions, including arts and sports packages, overnight hotel getaways and a football autographed by Jordy Nelson of the Green Bay Packers.

Proceeds from the auction, in addition to contributions directed by the Law School's Dean Joseph D. Kearney, go directly to students who demonstrate their dedication to working in public interest law. Plan to attend on Friday, February 10 at 5:30 p.m. in Eckstein Hall for an evening celebrating the spirit of dedication to others. Tickets are \$40. Light appetizers, free beer and wine will be served.

Interested in making a donation? All donations, financial and material, can be sent to: PILS Auction, Eckstein Hall, 1215 W. Michigan St., Milwaukee, WI 53233; or contact Elizabeth Brodek at [elizabeth.brodek@marquette.edu](mailto:elizabeth.brodek@marquette.edu) or (262) 930-7707. For more information, visit <http://law.marquette.edu/community/pils-2012>.

## What's Going On, cont.

### 33rd Annual Women Judges' Night

AWL's signature event, Women Judges' Night, will be held on **Tuesday, March 27** at 5 p.m. at the Italian Community Center. Our keynote speaker will be Margaret Raymond, the first woman Dean of the UW Law School. Invitations will be mailed in February. Mark your calendar now and plan to attend!

### Member News

**Theresa Laughlin** and **Brenda K. Sunby** have become the fourth and fifth women in the

state of Wisconsin to currently hold Board Certification as Civil Trial Specialists by the National Board of Trial Advocacy.

### Welcome New Members

- **Codi Carstens**
  - **Chantal Couture**
  - **Rachel Craig**
  - **Kaitlyn Sperial**
  - **Amy Wochos**
- Milwaukee County Register in Probate Office

\* \* \*

*If you have an event to publicize or an item for member news, send it to [dana@barefoot-marketing.com](mailto:dana@barefoot-marketing.com). Deadline is January 16.*

## Inside AWL

### President

Natalie Remington  
Quarles & Brady LLP  
411 E. Wisconsin Avenue  
Milwaukee, WI 53202  
phone: 414-277-5443  
email: [natalie.remington@quarles.com](mailto:natalie.remington@quarles.com)

### Treasurer

Caroline Spongberg  
The Marcus Corporation  
100 E. Wisconsin Ave., Suite 1900  
Milwaukee, WI 53202  
phone: 414-905-1457  
email: [carolinespongberg@marcuscorp.com](mailto:carolinespongberg@marcuscorp.com)

### Director of Programs

Allison Cimpl-Wiemer  
Quarles & Brady LLP  
411 E. Wisconsin Avenue  
Milwaukee, WI 53202  
phone: 414-277-5000  
email: [allison.cimpl-wiemer@quarles.com](mailto:allison.cimpl-wiemer@quarles.com)

## How to Reach Us

Our administrator, Dana Kader Robb, can be reached at 414-750-4404 or [dana@barefoot-marketing.com](mailto:dana@barefoot-marketing.com). Her fax number is 414-255-3615. Please send changes in your contact information directly to her.

### President-Elect

Jennine Sonntag  
Hannan & Associates, LLC  
13400 Bishops Lane, Suite 275  
Brookfield, WI 53005  
phone: 262-754-1260  
email: [jsonntag@hannanlegal.com](mailto:jsonntag@hannanlegal.com)

### Director of Membership

Lindsey Grady  
Milwaukee County Probate Division  
901 N. 9th Street, Room 207  
Milwaukee, WI 53233  
phone: 414-278-4455  
email: [lindsey@lcglawllc.com](mailto:lindsey@lcglawllc.com)

### Director of Special Events

Jennifer Allen  
Alan C. Olson & Associates, SC  
2880 S. Moorland Rd.  
New Berlin, WI 53151  
phone: 262-785-9606  
email: [jennifera.esq@gmail.com](mailto:jennifera.esq@gmail.com)

If you've changed jobs, won an award, are hosting an event, have committee news or a topic of interest to AWL members, this is your forum. Please submit information to Dana using the above contact details. We reserve the right to edit for length and content. Deadline is the 16th of each month prior to the issue. Newsletters will be in members' hands within the first week of the month.

### Secretary

Nancy Shue  
Storm, Balgeman, Miller  
& Klippel, s.c.  
1011 N. Mayfair Rd., Suite 200  
Wauwatosa, WI 53226  
phone: 414-777-4549  
email: [nshue@sbn-law.com](mailto:nshue@sbn-law.com)

### Director of Professionalism

Laura Schulteis Kwaterski  
Foley & Lardner LLP  
777 E. Wisconsin Avenue  
Milwaukee, WI 53202  
phone: 414-319-7069  
email: [laura.schulteis@gmail.com](mailto:laura.schulteis@gmail.com)

### Past President

Sheila C. Heitzig  
Executive Director, Inc.  
555 E. Wells St., Suite 1100  
Milwaukee, WI 53202  
phone: 414-272-6071  
email: [sheitzig@aaaai.org](mailto:sheitzig@aaaai.org)

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