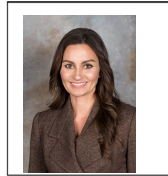


THE EQUAL TIMES

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DECEMBER President's Column



Happy Holidays! It's hard to believe that 2020 is finally coming to a close. What a year it has been! I am so very honored and humbled to have served as President of this great organization, and so very grateful for your support and encouragement. In my January column, I reflected on who we are as an organization and four words that captured my hopes for 2020: vision, foresight, clarity, and focus. I compared 2020 to a vast ocean full of endless possibilities, but I certainly didn't envision the endless challenges that 2020 would bring. However, there is no question that these unexpected challenges brought new possibilities and opportunities which the members and leaders of this organization tackled with vision, foresight, clarity, and focus. I would also add determination,

creativity, and kindness to the list!

I am incredibly proud of the hard work and dedication of everyone who has helped us succeed this year. This is an entirely volunteer based organization, and we would not have been able to continue and improve our programs and events without the great contributions of our members. I want to express special thanks to the Officers, Board of Directors, and Committee leaders who worked tirelessly to run the organization and adapt to this year's changes.

Thank you to Past-President **Hella Scheuerman** for chairing the Law Day Committee and planning a Meet the Candidates reception for the State Bar of Texas President-Elect candidates. Although these events were postponed due to COVID, much effort went into the planning. Hella was also a driving force in organizing our Autumn Affair virtual event and provided tremendous guidance and advice throughout the year. Thank you to President-Elect **Nicole Jackson**, who dedicated much time and effort to chair our Membership and Nominations and Election Committees, and provided invaluable advice and assistance on many other matters. Vice



President **Danielle Rushing** did an outstanding job producing our first-ever virtual Autumn Affair along with her co-chair **Jessica Glosson Davis**. It was a fabulous event and we can't wait to announce the funds we raised for Respite Care of San Antonio! Thank you, Danielle, for also assisting with the website, the Board election, and so much more. Much appreciation to Treasurer **Kathleen Church** for her tremendous work to keep our finances in order and her great efforts on the Mentor/Mentee and DEI Committees. Thank you to Treasurer-Elect **Lara Brock**, who also worked extremely hard to assist with our finances, acted as our Sponsorship Coordinator, and provided valuable assistance for Autumn Affair and other events. Many thanks to Secretary **Patti Oviatt** for the time and dedication she put in to keeping our records, and her service on the DEI Committee and in planning the SABA/BCWB Judicial Recognition Ceremony for Chief Justice Sandee Bryan Marion and Judge Karen Pozza.

I would like to thank **Judge Toni Arteaga** for spearheading our first-ever BCWB Zoominar and putting together a dynamic panel of judges to instruct us on how to navigate presiding in the pandemic. Judge Arteaga also helped plan the first-ever virtual Swearing-In Ceremony and provided constant positive encouragement. **Hayley Ellison** did a fantastic job organizing our luncheons at the beginning of the year, and then switched gears to manage the CLE component of our webinars, as well as put together the stellar raffle packages for Autumn Affair! Thank you to **Jane Ann Fosson** for her vision and efforts to create a referral directory, her assistance with membership, and her fantastic work on the DEI Committee and its Small Group Discussions Subcommittee. Many thanks to **Melanie Fry** for her help with Law Day and wonderful job chairing the Belva Lockwood Awards Committee and making sure our presentations of the awards were just as special as in years past. **Alicia Grant** went above and beyond co-chairing both the Luncheons and DEI Committees, helping organize the Texas Supreme Court webinar, speaking at our March luncheon, and serving as a panelist for the webinar on allyship and combatting racism. Much appreciation to **Natalie Karge**, who worked so hard and dedicated so much time to create beautiful and informative newsletters every month and also served on the DEI Committee.

Liz LaBarge did a fabulous job as the Board's LEAD Academy Liaison, and put in tremendous work as Chair of our Judicial Candidate Forum, which was a great success! Bravo to **Christine Rudy** who ran our website, created eye-catching graphics and social media content, played an active role on the DEI Committee, and even led a yoga session at our Board retreat in January! Many thanks to **Kayla Tanner** for planning our gorgeous and fun social networking event in February, at which we raised funds for the Young Women's Leadership Academy and voted on their Law Day contest entries. Kayla, you will be greatly missed! Thanks so much to **Robin Thorne** who went the extra mile this year planning virtual mentor/mentee round tables, stepped up to co-chair our new DEI Committee and plan the DEI learning series webinars, and organized our first virtual Swearing-In Ceremony with SAYLA. **Natalie Wilson** did a tremendous job as Chair of the Honors and Awards Committee identifying opportunities to nominate BCWB members and leaders for various accolades. Natalie also made great contributions to the DEI committee, including chairing the Small Group Discussions Subcommittee, and organized the fantastic gift boxes from SA in a Box for Autumn Affair. Much appreciation to **Judge Renee Yanta** for her awesome work in planning the annual CLE Retreat. Even though it had to be postponed, her efforts helped lay the groundwork for when we can once again gather in-person. Judge Yanta also served on the DEI Committee and led the charge on crafting its mission statement.

I also have to express my deep appreciation for the LEAD Academy Steering Committee led by Director **Elena Villasenor Sullivan** and made up of **Lauren Horne, Tiffanie Clausewitz, Sylvia Cardona, Christine Reinhard, Liz LaBarge, Katherine Noll, Ashley Senary Dahlberg, Emma Cano, Dannick Villasenor-Hernandez, Brenna Nava, Leslie Hyman**. These amazing women have kept the LEAD Academy going in the face of 2020's challenges, organized invaluable programming and opportunities for connection, and produced fantastic webinars for not just the LEAD class but the entire BCWB and legal community. Thank you to the LEAD Academy team!

The grit, generosity, and professionalism of our members has allowed us to not only survive 2020, but use it's challenges to learn and grow, support our community, and make a difference in the lives of the most vulnerable populations and the non-profits that support them. I will be ever thankful for this opportunity, and I wish each one of you a new year full of peace, love, and joy!

Brittany M. Weil
BCWB President

December 2020

LEAD Academy 2020 Service Project Respite Care Thanksgiving



LEAD provided decorations, as well as cookie decorating kits and a few Thanksgiving-themed games and projects for the kids.



SANTA delivered a duffel bag filled with new winter clothing to each child.



Spice of Life catered Thanksgiving lunch and packed up leftovers for a full dinner.



INNs of Court Holiday Children's Roller Bag Drive

to benefit the children of The Children's Shelter

Join the drive to provide children in foster care a roller bag to call their own. Children in foster care are given a black trash bag to carry and move personal items from foster placement to foster placement. This holiday season, let's give them something to call their own. This is a challenge among legal entities here in San Antonio. The group that brings in the most suitcases will receive a token of appreciation from the Outreach Group. Even though this is contest among groups, individuals are invited to take part...the children can never have too many personal items when their entire life has been upended.

The contributed bag should be (1) brand new; (2) filled with items you would want a (your) child to have with them (pillow, blanket, pj's, hygiene items, a book, cash card, cap, socks, underwear, gloves, a snack, etc.); (3) please tag bag with age/gender.

Collect as many roller bags as possible between now and December 18th.

For delivery / drop off details [CLICK HERE](#) for the Facebook page with more information



So, You Think You Have Covid – NOW WHAT?!?!

By Ileta A. Sumner, esq.

Last month, I had the scariest of current scares: I woke up unable to catch my breath. My epiglottis felt cemented shut by a glob of mucus and there was a wad of phlegm stuck in my throat. I couldn't cough it up and expectorate. As unpleasant as the thought, I couldn't swallow it into my tummy. The most horrible part, though, was that I could hardly catch a breath and began to feel vertigo set in. I thought no one was home with me – who do I contact and how?

Happy to report that it was merely a nasty cold – so bad that I developed a snore that previous night that had driven my hubby to the couch. Yet, it made me think: We've been instructed to contact our general practitioners/family doctors/internal medicine doctors if we feel we need a Covid test. I have my doctor's phone number in my cell phone; however, due to the gazillion maladies that have made a home in my body, I have no fewer than 10 doctors' phone numbers in my phone. Hence, in my contacts you will find Dr. X, 210-555-1212 but you will also find Dr. X, who is my cardiologist, listed as Cardiologist – Dr. X, 210-555-1212. So, if my husband ever has to contact any of my doctors, he doesn't have to remember a name, just look for the type, cardiologist, gastroenterologist, neurologist, etc. I suggest that you do this for your family practitioner, especially if your family is like mine and we all have different family doctors (my hubby goes to the VA; I use a civilian doctor while my younger son sees an adolescent specialist).

Still, what do you do if you are by yourself and cannot talk, like I couldn't on that almost fateful day? When in mid-panic, it's easy to forget who you should contact if your spouse is unavailable and you are like me and every other family member lives in a different time zone let alone a different city. Back when my boys were itty-bitty and required a babysitter whenever Jay and I needed to escape the madness, we had an emergency phone number list taped on the back of a cabinet door. I looked and it's still there even though my younger son is 19 and hasn't needed a sitter for at least a year. I have left it there for the reason that it was created – who to contact in case of an emergency. Since there are fewer instances more emergent than Covid at the moment, I've added all of our family doctors to that list, so each family member merely has to run to the cabinet and not try to unlock my phone in order to find my contacts.

Finally, what if you do find yourself alone, like I thought I was and, because of a cough or phlegm, you cannot breathe let alone speak, and there's no family or friends responding to your texts? Right now, while you are well and it is on your mind, contact your doctor's office and ask for a text number or an email address that can be used in case you cannot talk. Tell them that it would be for an urgent message so that it won't go to a spam file or to an unanswered voice mailbox. Program this info into your contacts on your phone and email contacts for use if ever needed.

One last thought: Although I was wheezing as I was trying gulp air during my almost – incident last month, I calmed down when I took my temperature and saw that it was normal. However, normal for me is 97.5; hence, if my temp is in the high 98's, that's a fever for me. Know what your normal is (e.g. your normal could be 99.2)...that can do a lot to alleviate that initial fear in these days where there is fear around every corner.

Wear your masks; stay socially distant; and, I hope to see you, not just ZOOM you, very soon.

ileta A. Sumner, esq. was the creator and original General Counsel for the Battered Women's Shelter in San Antonio, TX. She served as the BCWB President in 2002. Her full-time employment came to a halt when she contracted viral cardiomyopathy; however, she currently volunteers with various local public interest organizations.

BCWB LITES

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I am very honored to receive the Belva Lockwood Outstanding Lawyer Award! I have been a member of the BCWB for more than twenty years. We know of Ms. Lockwood's many achievements in opening doors for women in the legal profession. She was a champion! It is a great privilege and deeply touching to receive the Award from the BCWB!

In the 103 years since Ms. Lockwood passed away, there has been a long chain of people who have worked to open opportunities for women in the law. This year, the BCWB remembers the legacy of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Among Justice Ginsburg's many accomplishments, before joining the United States Supreme Court, she argued five cases before the Supreme Court that resulted in landmark decisions which changed many practices that treated women and men differently based on outdated stereotypes.

I have benefitted from the long chain of people that have brought me to this Award. Before I entered law school, I knew no lawyers—and certainly no women lawyers. Nevertheless, my beloved parents, supportive family, and terrific teachers gave me the tools and support I would need to consider the law as a profession! Once in law school, it did not take me long to realize that the legal profession was the right "fit" for me! I am so grateful for the long chain of people that opened the doors for law school for me. When I retired as a United States Magistrate Judge, I had devoted more than 35 years to public service. I am grateful for every moment of it! I am grateful to the long chain of people who opened the doors to public service for me and who sustained and supported me in my work! Thank you!

It was my singular good fortune to practice law in San Antonio and become associated with the BCWB! I am grateful for the BCWB for giving me the opportunity to work with so many talented persons—women and men, lawyers and non-lawyers—in support of the amazingly eclectic and impactful programs of the BCWB! Through the BCWB, I met, and learned from, intelligent, focused, disciplined, hard-working women and men! I know I am a better lawyer and a better person because of my association with you! Thank you!

The BCWB is in the golden chain that stretches from Ms. Lockwood's hands, 103 years ago, and into our hands today! I am proud of you for your many accomplishments! I am grateful to you for your exemplary work, skilled mentorship, sterling example, generosity, kindness, and friendship! Thank you for the Award! Until my work is done, I will try to live up to it!



In gratitude,
Pamela Mathy

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Bexar County Women's Bar Foundation is twofold: to provide educational opportunities to its members; and to protect and strengthen local families by supporting legal and charitable programs.

**Please Direct All
Questions, Comments and
Submissions to:**

Newsletter@BexarCountyWomensBar.Org

THE EQUAL TIMES

Edited by

Natalie E. Karge