

THE EQUAL TIMES

Bexar County Women's Bar Association

BCWBA

Bexar County Women's Bar Foundation

December 2019

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THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



I want to thank all of the BCWBA members this year for your involvement and support of this organization. Our members supported us with their time, talent, and treasures, in a variety of ways. It is through the support of members like you that makes this organization so amazing! You supported us by attending the monthly and Around Town Lunches, the CLE Central Market event, coordinating mentor/mentee events with St. Mary's Law Students, attending our annual retreat, participating in family events such as Cookies with Santa, supporting the annual Swearing In Ceremony for new attorneys, volunteering for Law Day and Lead The Way with students from the Young Women's Leadership Academy, promoting the events of the LEAD Academy, advocating for one another by nominating members for honors/awards and board positions, speaking at our events, sponsorships, nominating non-profit agencies for selection of this year's Autumn Affair beneficiary and by your volunteer work for Autumn Affair.

I also want to thank our 2019 Board Members and Committee Chairs, who dedicated countless hours at board



President's Column (cont.)

meetings, chairing events, and for all of your dedication in continuing the work of BCWBA and the services that this organization offers to its members. **Greta McFarling**, our immediate Past President, offered her guidance whenever we needed it, whether it was for the nominations committee, Autumn Affair, or any other event, she was always there to assist us with any question. We will miss **Lindsay Riley**, who served on this Board for so many years and volunteered for so many positions, including Treasurer, luncheon chair, and auction chair for Autumn Affair. **Brittany Weil** dedicated countless hours in arranging decorations for the Autumn Affair, volunteering for the Autumn Affair Kick Off party and President's Party earlier this year. **Brittany** also prepared our monthly newsletters. We love your creativity and enthusiasm! Thank you to **Amanda Crouch**, our Treasurer, for all of your work this year. For anyone that has been a treasurer in the past, we understand how much

time and dedication is spent every month in preparing the treasurer's reports. We appreciate you! **Danielle Rushing** has done an awesome job this year as Sponsorship Chair and Secretary, two jobs that require a lot of time and detail. She was successful in both positions and was always willing to take on additional roles, as needed, for BCWB. Thank you to **Leslie Hyman**, who chaired the Central Market CLE earlier this year at HEB Central Market Cooking School. It was so much fun to receive the cooking lesson and to have such a nice dinner, while listening to the truly inspiring Susan Pamerleau, United

States Marshall for the Western District of Texas, who discussed her amazing career path. **Nicole Jackson** served as one of the chairs for the Judicial Liaison committee and volunteered for the Committee that selected this year's Autumn Affair beneficiary. **Nicole** was very thorough in her evaluations and visited the non-profit agencies during the site visits. Thank you **Nicole** for your dedication. **Paige Andabaker**, St. Mary's Law Student Director, kept us up to date with Women's Law Association events and progress throughout

the year, and coordinated WLA member volunteers to assist with Autumn Affair. It was so delightful to have Paige serve on our board. **Kayla Tanner**, chair of our Community Service Committee, and **Sarah Donahue**, formed a committee that identified community service opportunities for our members. Earlier this year, **Kayla**





also planned a food drive for the San Antonio Food Bank. Thank you to **Kayla** and her committee for those opportunities to give back to our community!

Durime Fahim and **Kathleen Church** did a fantastic job as Chairs of Autumn Affair. They spent a lot of time planning, bringing forth their creativity to every aspect of this event, from the

Save the Date, to the invitations, the kick-off party, décor and overall program. They worked so well together, an inspirational team! **Lara Brock**, **Jane Anne Fosson** and **Judge Yanta**, spent a lot of their time in meetings planning for our annual retreat and it was noticeable.

They, along with their committees, sponsors and volunteers like **Laurie Weiss**, gave us outstanding speakers, networking, and an opportunity for us to enjoy ourselves, while earning CLE hours. Thank you for bringing our members such a special event! With much appreciation also to **Jane Anne** for keeping us organized with the honors and awards committee. We are so thankful to the chairs of



our family committee, **Laura Cauley** and **Melanie Fry**, for planning family events like the Spurs game, the Annual Halloween Spooktacular and Cookies with Santa, so our members can network while spending fun time with their families. We are grateful for **Patti Oviatt** and her committee members **Elaine Damian Salazar** and **Casey Lee**, who planned our monthly luncheons and scheduled our luncheon speakers throughout this year. They also planned the holiday luncheon on December 13, 2019, at The Quarry Golf Club. You will enjoy it! **Robin Thorner** and **Karina Cantu** lead mentorship circles as chairs of the Mentor-Mentee Committee. These gatherings were so important for the law students and members and we are thankful for your coordination of these events. **Robin** and **Serina Rivela** planned the Swearing In Ceremony for newly licensed attorneys and their families. It was such a special and personal event for those in attendance! Thank you also to **Serina** for working with **Brittany** to plan the President's Party earlier this year and for planning the Law Day Event, along with **Jessica Lerma**, that raised funds for the students at the Young Women's Leadership Academy.

It was a remarkable year to work with all of you!

Hella Scheuerman
BCWB President



YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO THE

*Bexar County Women's Bar
Association*

HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

DECEMBER 13, 2019

12 PM – 1 PM

Quarry Golf Club

444 E. BASSE ROAD

\$40 per person

Please bring a book, for kinder to 2nd grade readers,
to donate to San Antonio Youth Literacy.

Learn About San Antonio Youth Literacy

Originally established in 1984 to address high school to workforce transition, it has been the mission of San Antonio Youth Literacy (SAYL) and the Reading Buddy Program since the mid 90's to provide one-on-one support to children in San Antonio by empowering them with the skills needed to "read to learn" while fostering self-confidence and an enjoyment of reading. As a part of the Reading Buddy Program, we allow each of the students to self-select a pre-screened, reading level appropriate book to take home to either start or add to their personal libraries. The research is clear that children who own books of their own are better readers and maintain a life-long joy of reading. Through our partnerships with area corporations, faith-based organizations, colleges and universities, we are able to recruit and train volunteers who are then matched with 2 students for the entire school year.

Working with local school districts and their elementary schools, SAYL collaborates directly with school administration and teachers using the data from routinely administered reading assessments to determine student selection into the program. Approximately 1,300 students in 5 school districts at 73 school sites receive 30 minutes of one-on-one tutoring by nearly 700 Reading Buddies. This instructional time allows the student the opportunity to receive personalized attention and instructional reinforcement and support in their efforts to improve their reading skills (decoding, comprehension, fluency and word recognition.) In addition, the students are provided the attention of another caring adult resulting in improved self-confidence demonstrated by the children SAYL serves. Academically, during 2018 -2019, students participating in the Reading Buddy program improved on average 4.45 reading levels as measured by the Fountas & Pinnell Assessment. This compared to 2.5 reading levels for the same demographic not participating in the program. Because the Reading Buddy Program is volunteer driven, the cost of delivering and maintaining its curricular integrity is kept to a minimum. In 2018 -19, the value of our volunteer hours was placed at \$188,726.90 as calculated by The Corporation of National and Community Service reports that the national average for the current dollar value of volunteer time in Texas is \$25.10 per hour.



Swearing-In Ceremony Recap

By: **Robin Thorner**
Committee Co-Chair

On Thursday, November 14th, BCWB and SAYLA co-hosted its annual new attorney Swearing-In Ceremony. This year the event was held in the Honorable Craig Gargotta's courtroom in the US Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Texas. Judge Gargotta welcomed the 9 new attorneys and their friends and family with words of inspiration and encouragement before the Honorable Sandee Bryan Marion administered the oath. The event was capped off with a reception where guests had the opportunity to meet BCWB and SAYLA board members, as well as the judges.



November Around Town Lunch Recap



By: **Hella Scheuerman**

On Tuesday, November 19, 2019, we held our monthly Around Town Lunch at La Fonda on Main. Our group had a fun time catching up, while enjoying the great Mexican food! We learned from each other's experiences and discussed the similarities and differences in our respective practices. Most of all, we laughed together and had a great time! I hope you will join us at the next Around Town Lunch later in December.



Join Us for the December Around Town Lunch!



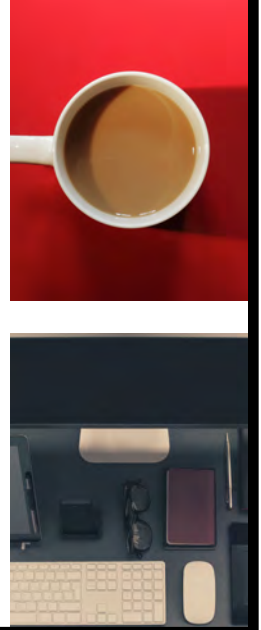
Join Kathleen Church and Durime Fahim for the December Around Town Lunch on Tuesday, December 10, 2019 at noon at The Smoke Shack, 3714 Broadway. No need to RSVP. Just look for Kathleen and Durime. We look forward to seeing you there!



MENTORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

By: Robin Thorner

As part of our commitment to support future women lawyers, BCWB and the St. Mary's Women's Law Association are teaming up to host a series of mentorship circles this spring. If you would like to host a small group of WLA members at your home, a coffee shop, or a restaurant for an informal discussion about your career and to share your advice, please e-mail Robin Thorner at rthorner@stmarytx.edu. Prefer to co-host with another attorney? The more, the merrier! You set the date, time, location and number of students you wish to invite, and we will take care of the coordination.



National Conference of Women's Bar Associations November 2019 Newsletter

Did you know that we are a member of the National Conference of Women's Bar Associations?

Click [here](#) to read the NCWBA November 2019 Newsletter and learn about other women's bar associations across the country!

Bexar County Women's Bar Annual Cookies with Santa



**Saturday, December 7, 2019
1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

**Witte Museum
Prassel Auditorium
3801 Broadway St.
San Antonio, TX 78209**

Register at <https://www.bexarcountywomensbar.org/event-3586277>

BCWB Members: \$25 per family
Non-Members: \$35 per family

Registration includes full-day admission to the Witte, one 4" x 6" print photo and access to digital picture with Santa, cookies to eat, balloon animals, and Holiday cheer!

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SPONSOR:



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Member Spotlight



2019 BCWB President Hella Sheuerman

By: **Brittany M. Weil**
BCWB Vice President

Hella is a Partner at the Scheuerman Law Firm, PLLC. She is originally from Managua, Nicaragua. She immigrated to the United States with her family at a young age as a result of the political and economic climate in war-torn Nicaragua. Hella is Board Certified in Personal Injury Trial Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. She has extensive experience in handling all types of civil litigation, including serious injury and death cases. In her 22+ years of private practice, she has obtained significant trial experience as lead attorney in more than 50 jury trials to verdict. Few lawyers of her generation can claim such an accomplishment. Among Hella's many accomplishments and charitable activities, she has been the BCWB's fearless leader in 2019, ensuring that we continue our mission to empower and serve our members and our community.

2019 was a busy year for you with the opening of your own law firm and taking over as President of the BCWB. What were the most challenging and rewarding moments for you in 2019?

While I was very busy this year, it was an amazing year and I enjoyed it! Serving as President of BCWB gave me more responsibility, which in turn, motivated me to take on more challenges in my career. As expected, there were times I would have to choose between scheduling a work event and attending a BCWB event. Which of course, is not easy, but scheduling decisions have to be made. For example, unfortunately, I will not be available to attend the BCWB Holiday Luncheon this year since I will be at an out of town mediation.

What strategies or skills did you utilize to stay organized and overcome any obstacles you encountered?

Lists are good for keeping organized! I have many lists, with the same information, in different formats. It is good for the mind to see the "to do list" in different formats.

Member Spotlight cont.

Who were/are your mentors, and how did they impact you?

I love to learn from everyone I meet. I believe each one of you has taught me something about a life lesson. When I hear how others manage family life, careers, changing jobs, promotions, illness, passing of a family member, and so forth, you offer at that moment a mentorship opportunity. As BCWB members, we are all teaching each other and impacting each other's lives, which makes being a part of this organization so awesome.

What has been your greatest learning experience as President of the BCWB?

I was more involved in attending events this year in our community due to the responsibility of the position as President of this organization. In that process, I learned more about the needs of our community and how we as attorneys, with our networks, can help and offer assistance.

What has been your greatest accomplishment as President of the BCWB?

I am very proud to be a part of this tremendous network of the women of BCWBA and am thankful for the opportunity to have served as President this year. Everything we accomplished was due to the efforts of the volunteers involved. As President, I continuously invited new members to join BCWB and asked existing members to get more involved in the many events we offered. It was very rewarding to see other women get involved and become part of this network.

What is your favorite thing about our organization?

I love our members! We all have different backgrounds, experiences, and career paths, yet we all come together to serve as members of BCWB. I enjoy getting to know members on a personal level, and learning from our differences, which is what makes us so strong as an organization.

**Thank you, Hella, for your leadership, inspiration,
friendship, and dedication to the BCWB!**

Meet the Bexar County Women's Bar Association/Foundation 2020 Board of Directors

A big thank you to everyone that ran in the 2020 election and to all of our members who voted. Congratulations to the officers and directors of the 2020 BCWB Board. We thank you for your service and look forward to an exciting new year!

Officers

Past-President
Hella Scheuerman

President
Brittany Weil

President-Elect
Nicole Jackson

Vice President
Danielle Rushing

Treasurer
Kathleen Church

Treasurer-Elect
Lara Brock

Secretary
Patti Oviatt

Directors

Judge Antonia "Toni" Arteaga

Hayley Ellison

Jane Ann Fosson

Melanie Fry

Alicia Grant

Natalie Karge

Liz LaBarge

Christine Rudy

Kayla Tanner

Robin Thorner

Natalie Wilson

Former Judge Renée Yanta



BEXAR COUNTY WOMEN'S BAR FOUNDATION
LEAD ACADEMY
LEAD. EMPOWER. ADVANCE. DEVELOP.

2019 Class Graduation

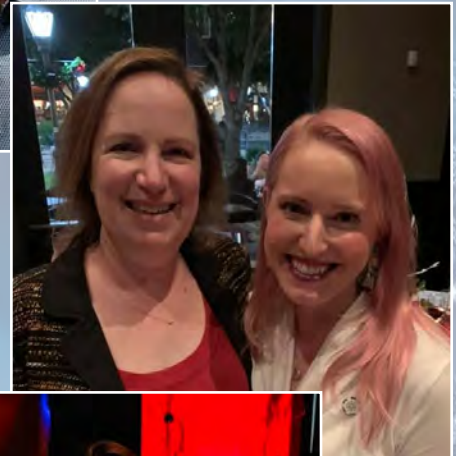
On December 4, the BCWBF LEAD Academy celebrated the graduation of its Class of 2019. What a WONDERFUL evening it was celebrating the 16 phenomenal attorneys that make up the class. Founder and outgoing director Tiffanie Clausewitz gave a moving farewell in which she shared her journey and the importance of LEAD. Class member Kelly Davis gave an address, and Casey Lee, Danielle Rushing, and Hayley Ellison also spoke about the class community service projects. Finally, Keynote speaker Jenna Saucedo-Herrera inspired the room before the graduates received their awards. We can't wait to see what these amazing women will do in the future! Congratulations to all of the graduates and a huge thank you to their families and firms/businesses for their support.





BEXAR COUNTY WOMEN'S BAR FOUNDATION
LEAD ACADEMY
LEAD. EMPOWER. ADVANCE. DEVELOP.

2019 Class Graduation





VOLUNTEERS WANTED!

Are you looking for an opportunity to get involved with BCWB? We are looking for volunteers for 2020 to help with our luncheons, award-winning newsletter, website administration, and social media and email coordination. Please email Danielle Rushing at drushing@dykema.com if you are interested in any of these positions or serving on a committee for next year!



SATLA Holiday Gift Wrapping Event for CASA

When:

Monday, December 9th

Where:

CASA Headquarters
1956 S WW White Rd.
San Antonio, TX 78222

Time:

5:30 PM - 7:00 PM

Items Needed:

- Gift Wrap (rolls of holiday wrapping paper, ribbons, bows, tape).
- You are more than welcome to bring a toy for a child in foster care.





Be the Difference in Their Life.

HOW BCWB CAN GET INVOLVED WITH CASA.

OUR *Mission*

The mission of Child Advocates San Antonio (CASA) is to recruit, train, and supervise court-appointed volunteer Advocates who provide constancy for abused and neglected children and youth while advocating for services and placement in safe and permanent homes.



VOLUNTEER

Our main volunteer program involves training and a monthly commitment to become a **Court Appointed Advocate** for a child(ren) in need.

If you are not available to become an Advocate, you can also participate in our "Friends of CASA" program, where you can volunteer at events and donation drives. Email Development@casa-satx.org to learn more.



SHARE

Our message is a powerful one... help us make sure it's heard by inviting CASA to speak at any organization or group you're involved with.

You can also share our message on social media! Follow our page on your preferred platform and share any post to help spread our message.

#CASASATX

General CASA Post

#35YEARSOFHOPE

#AFORTRESSOFHOPE

Capital Campaign / Donation Post



CASA

CHILD ADVOCATES
SAN ANTONIO



casa-satx.org



P: 210.225.7070

SUPPORT



Help CASA provide more Advocates for children who have been abused and neglected in our community. Visit the "Donate" section on our website to see all the gift opportunities we have available for individuals or businesses wanting to support CASA.

GALLERY OF HOPE SPONSORSHIP

Annual Gala recognizing our Adopted CASA kids.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN SPONSORSHIP

Help us advocate for more children in a bigger facility.

GENERAL DONATION

Gift any amount to help us serve more children in San Antonio.

Who is RAICES?

RAICES is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit agency that promotes justice by providing free and low-cost legal services to underserved immigrant children, families, and refugees.

Founded in 1986 as the Refugee Aid Project by community activists in South Texas, RAICES has grown to be the largest immigration legal services providers in Texas. With offices in Austin, Corpus Christi, Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston and San Antonio.

RAICES is a frontline organization in the rolling debate about immigration. As an organization that combines expertise developed from the daily practice of immigration law with a deep commitment to advocacy. RAICES is unique among immigration organizations.

Our advocacy and commitment to change are driven by the clients and families we serve every day as our attorneys and legal assistants provide legal advocacy and representation in an immigration system that break apart families and leaves millions without pathways to legal status.

How to get involved?

We are in need of attorneys to help fight for the vulnerable. We need attorneys ready to do their part to ensure justice.

Attorneys will be mentored throughout the process of representation.

Houston

Michelle Aldrich, the Pro Bono Attorney Coordinator

email: michelle.aldrich@raicestexas.org

San Antonio

Aida Farahani, the Pro Bono Attorney Coordinator

Email: aida.farahani@raicestexas.org

Dallas

Priscilla Villarreal, the Dallas Pro Bono Attorney Coordinator

Email: priscilla.villarreal@raicestexas.org



Help St. Mary's University law students dress for success

The Office of Career Services is accepting donations of business attire to help law students build their professional wardrobes.

Donations can be dropped off at the Office of Career Services in the Sarita Kenedy East Law Library, Room 216, or at the next monthly luncheon.

Please contact Kim Underdown at 210-436-3511 or kunderdown@stmarytx.edu to arrange a donation pick-up.



OFFICE OF
CAREER SERVICES

law.stmarytx.edu

The St. Mary's Law "Suit Up Station" is now open for law students who are in need of professional attire for an interview or even their first day on the job. If you have business professional and business casual clothes and accessories you no longer wear, we will happily take them!

BCWB LITES



Congratulations to Heather Tessmer for accepting a fellowship with the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers!

What does it mean to be offered a fellowship with AAML?

To be represented by a Fellow of the AAML is to be represented by a leading practitioner in the field of family law. The 1650 AAML Fellows across the United States are generally recognized by judges and attorneys as preeminent family law practitioners with a high level of knowledge, skill, and integrity. Academy Fellows enjoy a reputation for professionalism, competence, and integrity.

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

Brittany M. Weil