

# THE EQUAL TIMES

## INSIDE:

- President's Column
- Save the Date: Allyship Panel Discussion
- Anxiety in the Face of a Pandemic Webinar
- Texas Supreme Court Zoominar
- Work Smarter Not Harder Zoominar
- Anti-Racism Advocacy: A Panel Discussion on Systemic Racism and Becoming Agents of Change
- BCWB Lites
- Message from the Board: COVID-19

## July

### President's Column

*The July President's Column is brought to you by Alicia Grant, BCWB Director, Co-Chair of the new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee, BCWBF LEAD Academy graduate, and Associate at Norton Rose Fulbright.*

For days, I avoided watching the video of Mr. George Floyd's death. I told myself it was enough that I knew the content; after all, I was dealing with the challenges of life in a pandemic. How could I mentally and emotionally take on anything more? Then, I heard about the threats directed towards Darnella Frazier, who was theseventeen-year-old girl who filmed the injustice and posted it on Facebook. Her life will never be the same, and neither should mine. At 2:15 am while my home was asleep, I watched as Mr. Floyd did everything we have been told is enough to protect us against a rogue cop. Even as Mr. Floyd begged for his life, he still said "please" and "sir." When I heard him call for his "mama," my heart broke and the tears would not stop.

Following Mr. Floyd's death, I was shocked and hurt by comments that flooded my social media. I watched as friends expressed outrage about the injustice of lumping all police officers into one category but said nothing about the heinous acts of certain police officers. Others rushed to search Mr. Floyd's background in an effort to justify his death, instead of acknowledging that no one deserves such a death. I read posts arguing that racism is not a problem, or worse, advising the black community to grow "thicker skin." Even my own teenage niece was attacked by foul language on social media because she chose to advocate for equality.

Next came the text messages seeking my reassurance that racism is not a problem in my world. Many friends reached out, hopeful that the ugliness in the news could be compartmentalized to other cities. I realized my silence has served to create assumptions that everything is ok. Although I was involved in various diversity initiatives, I had focused on perfecting an approach to my world that was built upon complacency. I learned how to blend in and cope with structural discrimination instead of confronting it.

Yes, racism is part of my world. I had a professor tell me that I probably would have accepted slavery as a cultural norm if I had been alive at that time. I have observed the look of shock on opposing counsel's face when they meet me for the first time and say "You're so articulate on the phone" or "You sound white. Where did you grow up?" Even strangers have told me they would never hire a black attorney to represent them because society does not respect black attorneys.

The BCWB has acknowledged hindrances within the organization due to a lack of diversity and has decided to take action to address them. Given my experiences and the board's desire to improve, I am happy to announce the formation of a diversity, equity, and inclusion committee. This committee is tasked with creating a more welcoming and diverse BCWB by articulating and enacting diversity and inclusion goals and initiatives for every aspect of our organization. I am confident this committee will be a catalyst for action and engagement within the BCWB and our Bexar County community. Silence is not an option for any of us. Please contact me or my co-chair, Robin Thorner, with any ideas or questions you have. I invite you to join us and to hold us accountable as we engage, listen, educate and become part of the solution.



**Alicia M. Grant**  
BCWB Director  
Co-Chair, DEI Committee

# SAVE THE DATE

**WEDNESDAY, JULY 29, 4:00 P.M.**

Join us as we discuss allyship and build on the discussion started by LEAD Academy's anti-racism panel. Let's continue to work towards becoming agents of change.

More details will be provided soon.



# MAY WEBINAR

In May, we teamed up with the LEAD Academy to co-host a webinar on *Anxiety in the Face of a Pandemic*. This webinar was presented by Talli Goldman-Dolge, Chief Executive Officer, and Kristy Dean, Chief Clinical Officer, of the Jewish Family Service of San Antonio.

It was a timely presentation that focused on how the COVID pandemic is impacting our mental health. The presenters discussed the various functions of stress and anxiety to our mental and physical health.

They also provided information on self-care techniques, such as mindfulness and meditation practices, and the benefits they can have to our mind and body.

One quick tip they gave is that listening to the song "Weightless" by Marconi Union can reduce your anxiety up to 65%!

In case you missed it, you can view the Webinar by [CLICKING HERE](#) and you can access the corresponding slides by [CLICKING HERE](#).

# June Zoominars

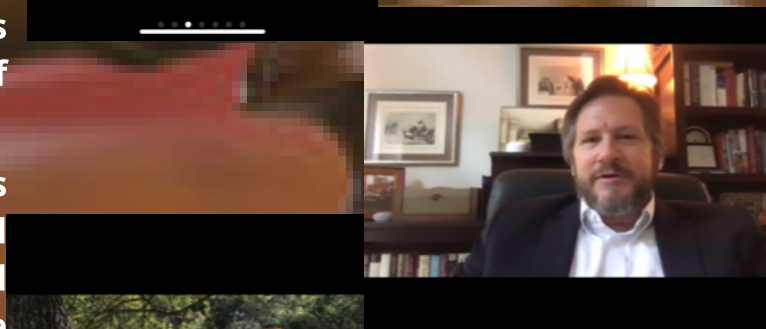
In June, we graciously hosted a Zoominar featuring Justice Eva Guzman, Justice Jeff Boyd, and Justice Bret Busby of the Texas Supreme Court, for a discussion on the *Texas Supreme Court Practice in the COVID-19 Era*. Alicia Grant, BCWB Board Member and Luncheon Co-Chair, was the moderator for the event.

The Justices discussed how the Court is responding to the unique challenges to the justice system posted by the COVID pandemic. The Justices reported that they, along with the rest of Texas, have had to adapt very quickly to working from home and the use of Zoom. And Justice Boyd was eager to show off his preferred Zoom background...a view of camping in the great outdoors!

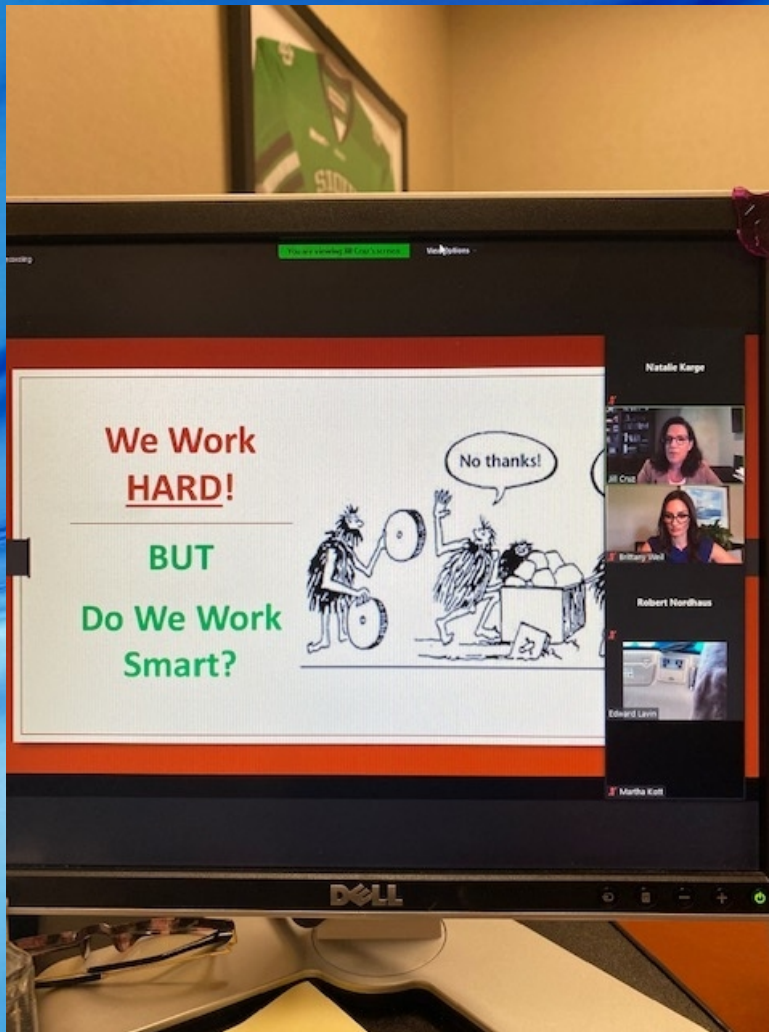
The Justices even provided some practical tips for those that are having to do remote oral arguments and hearings. Their tips included doing a mock trial or hearing practice at home with friends and family via Zoom, ensuring you have proper lighting, and checking internet speed and microphone capabilities. They also suggested setting up your home to feel like the courtroom, such as finding a household item to use as a makeshift podium.

The Justices also discussed how they got involved in the law. Justice Busby stated that his role model is his mother. She attended law school at St. Mary's and was the only female in her graduating class. After graduation she couldn't find a job but eventually went on to argue tax appeals and never lost an argument. An inspiring story for us all.

If you happened to have missed this Zoominar and would like to watch [CLICK HERE](#).



# June Zoominars Cont.



In June we hosted another wonderful Zoominar presented by Dr. Jill Lynch Cruz, titled "Want to be More Productive? Work Smarter, Not Harder".

Dr. Cruz of JLC Consulting is an executive coach and career development consultant, who specifically works with female attorneys.

In her presentation Dr. Cruz discussed the latest neuroscience-related insights and best practices for improving productivity and habit formation to help attorneys improve their productivity and effectiveness.

Dr. Cruz discussed some of the top productivity blocks for women attorneys and how to overcome those challenges, such as multi-tasking, constantly checking emails and phone notifications, and lack of boundaries (this is an especially big issue when working from home). One example that Dr. Cruz provided is that most of us are always checking emails because of the constant notifications. Instead Dr. Cruz suggests turning off all notifications and setting aside a planned time each hour or couple of hours to check and respond to emails. This method then leaves more time to focus on a single project without all the distractions.

If you missed this helpful Zoominar by Dr. Cruz, [CLICK HERE](#) to watch.

# June Zoominars Cont.



In response to the events post-George Floyd and the Black Lives Matter movement, the LEAD Academy organized a Zoominar event on *Anti-Racism Advocacy: A Panel Discussion on Systemic Racism and Becoming Agents of Change*.

The discussion was kicked off by Board Member Alicia Grant and LEAD Director Elena Villasenor Sullivan. The Panelists were: Brian Steward, Danielle Hargrove, Lisa Tatum, and Celeste Brown. The discussion was moderated by Tess House.



The purpose of the panel was to learn more about the Black Lives Matter movement and educate ourselves on how and what we can do to support it. The incredible panelists shared their personal testimonies and experiences with racism and microaggressions. They also delved into the various ways they have experienced systemic racism and the many ways it persists in this country. The panelists pushed the audience to lean into the discomfort of having these conversations and to continue asking questions and being part of the discussion.

The attendance response to the panel was AMAZING! If you missed it, don't worry you can still watch it and be a part of the discussion by [CLICKING HERE](#).

We hope you will plan to join us for the next panel discussion on allyship at the end of this month brought to you by the newly formed Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) committee of the BCWB. Be on the lookout for more details to come.

# BCWB LITES



**Congrats to Kayla Tanner & family on the arrival of their little boy, Dean! He made his debut on May 27th! Congrats to the Tanner Family!**



**Congrats to Jane Ann Fosson & family on the arrival of their little girl, Avery Madeleine! She made her long anticipated debut on Sunday, June 14, 2020. She clocked in at 7 lbs 10 oz in weight and 20 inches in length. Congrats to the Fosson family!**



# BCWB LITES CONTINUED



**CONGRATULATIONS** to Patti Oviatt!

Patti has been named a New Fellow of the Texas Bar Foundation. Congrats Patti!



**COVID-19**

**PANDEMIC**



**A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD: COVID-19**

Dear BCWB Members,

After careful consideration of the escalation of Coronavirus (COVID-19), and following the guidance of local, state and national authorities, the State Bar of Texas, and our local courts, the **BCWB will be postponing all in-person events, gatherings and meetings from March 15 - April 15.** We will continue to monitor the outbreak of Coronavirus and will provide updates and notices of any further postponements of events.

The health and safety of our members and our community is of primary importance, and it is clear that postponement of in-person events and other social distancing measures are necessary to prevent the spread of Coronavirus and protect our collective welfare **CLICK HERE** to view orders and notices from our local state and federal courts.

Please let us know if you have any questions or suggestions on how we can serve you better by sending an email to [info@bexarcountywomensbar.org](mailto:info@bexarcountywomensbar.org).

Thank you for your continued support of our organization. Let's all stay calm, safe and kind.

The BCWB Board of Directors

# 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.*

Bexar County Women's Bar Association

# BCWB

Bexar County Women's Bar Foundation

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

**[Newsletter@BexarCountyWomensBar.Org](mailto:Newsletter@BexarCountyWomensBar.Org)**

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*Edited by*

**Natalie E. Karge**