

January 2015

KCWWL Newsletter

January 2015

Volume 7 , Number 2

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Meet the New KCWWL President, Interview with Kara F. Morse



In what area of law do you focus your practice, and what is the most challenging part of your practice?

I am a regulatory and transactional health care attorney at Stoel Rives, LLP. That means I help health care entities such as medical groups, hospitals, managed care organizations and large employers navigate through the new world being formed by health care reform so that they can continue to provide high quality services to patients and enrollees. I advise clients regarding organizational documents, contracts, mergers and acquisitions, and strategic ventures; all of which must be compliant with the unique health care regulatory framework, including Medicare, Medicaid, fraud and abuse laws, HIPAA and many others. The hardest part of my job is certainly not unique--it's keeping up with all the new guidance, recognizing how one issue fits within the larger framework, and synthesizing it all to bring added value to our clients.

What made you interested in becoming a part of the KCWWL Board, and what are some of your goals for your presidency?

I joined KCWWL as one of my first acts in Seattle. I had just moved here from Philadelphia and a friend invited me to attend a board meeting. I was looking for a job at the time and welcomed any opportunity to network, especially with other female attorneys in the

city. My timing was impeccable, as the group was looking for a Secretary. I volunteered and was voted in. Over the next couple of years I moved to President-Elect and now President. It's been a quick transition to leadership, but I wouldn't have even considered it without the incredible work of my predecessors (Sarah Mack and Erin Wilson) and the rest of the board.

When I initially joined KCWWL, I was certainly interested in the networking aspect of the group, but now it has really become about a broader community of women. It has given me opportunities to mix with litigators, government lawyers, criminal lawyers, in-house counsel and judges that I would never have met as a corporate lawyer. I have also very much enjoyed volunteering in our ongoing partnership with Mary's Place. Our Civic Affairs chair, Stephanie Marshall, has really turned that into something meaningful for both our members and the women we serve at the center.

As President I hope to support the board so that we can maintain our flagship events (including the Judicial Appreciation Luncheon, speed networking and Criminal Law Soiree), and continue to increase our presence in the broader community. This means strengthening our connections to groups like Mary's Place, the law schools and other minority bar groups. I consider KCWWL's greatest value to be in creating a community where female attorneys can interact and inspire/educate/energize one another.

[You have significant volunteer experience helping the underprivileged and disabled; what inspired you to give back to the community in that manner?](#)

My parents instilled that value in me. I have always felt privileged by the family and opportunities I've had, so I am happy to contribute some small part of that back in terms of time and money. Plus, engaging with the communities in which I live and work makes me feel more purposeful and connected.

[Do you have a most significant woman mentor or role model?](#)

I have never had just one person that I saw as a mentor, but I do look to others for inspiration. In the public sphere, a few of the extraordinary women I admire are Hillary Clinton, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, and Christine Gregoire for being intelligent, compelling, socially conscious and indefatigable. More importantly, however, I

am surrounded by friends and family who act as sounding boards and role models every day.

If you could give a piece of advice either personal or professional (or both) to new women attorneys what would you tell them?

A colleague once told me that there are three aspects to job satisfaction: the work you do, the people you do it with, and how it fits in with your life more broadly. This isn't a magical formula, but it does make more sense to me than the concept of "work-life balance", which I think set up a false dichotomy between "work" and "life." My work is a big part of my life, and I try to make sure that it is a positive influence by managing the mix of all three elements. If one is suffering at any given time, I can usually find strength in the other two to put things in perspective and move forward.

Washington State Supreme Court Swearing-In Ceremony

Article written by [Lyn Arnold](#),
Environmental Attorney, KCWWL Member

On Monday, January the 12th, four Washington State Supreme Court Justices were sworn in at the Temple of Justice in Olympia: the Honorable Charles W. Johnson, as Associate Chief Justice; and the Honorable Mary E. Fairhurst, the Honorable Debra L. Stephens, and the Honorable Mary I. Yu, as Justices.

It was an overflowing crowd of friends, family, staff and well-wishers. In fact, there was so many people attending, extra seating was set up in the atrium of the Temple. To accommodate the crowd, remote screens and a sound system were set up to broadcast the event.

As the most senior Justice to be sworn in, Justice Johnson was first. Johnson is currently the longest serving Justice, having joined the court in 1991. Earning his law degree from the University of Puget

Sound School of Law (now Seattle University School of Law) in 1976, he was the first graduate to be elected to the Washington Supreme Court. He was presented by the Honorable Gerry Alexander, retired Supreme Court Justice. It was a charming speech in which Alexander mentioned the court's age limit of 75, and Johnson's potential to be the longest serving Justice in the history of the Court.

Justice Fairhurst was presented by Narda Pierce, Supreme Court Commissioner. Ms. Pierce spoke, among other things, of the Justice's work on a constitutional amendment to increase the rights of crime victims while still honoring the rights of the accused. After taking her oath, Justice Fairhurst delivered very moving remarks about her time on the bench and her thankfulness for her good health, having battled and recovered from two cancer diagnoses.

Justice Stephens was presented by Grace O'Connor, Assistant Attorney General and former law clerk. Stephens was appointed as a judge for Division Three of the Washington Court of Appeals in 2007. She was appointed to the Supreme Court and took office in 2008. Stephens is the first woman from Eastern Washington to serve on the Court. In her remarks, she spoke of the support of her family and the dedication of all who work for the Court.

Justice Mary Yu, the newest member of the Court, was the last to take the oath. Justice Yu served more than 14 years as a trial court judge in King County Superior Court before being appointed last year to the Supreme Court. Yu is the first openly LGBTQ member of the court, as well as the first Latina-American and Asian-American.

Yu was presented by Fe Lopez, the Executive Director of the Seattle Community Police Commission. She delivered a stirring speech, citing Yu's dedication to not only local organizations (such as the Civility Project of the Robert's Fund Foundation and FareStart), but to her willingness to mentor, guide and encourage young attorneys, clerks and students.

Justice Yu's swearing-in was met with a standing ovation. Her remarks were thoughtful and inspiring. She spoke of her family and all who have supported her throughout her legal career. She thanked her colleagues for their support and inspiration, and pledged to work with dedication to crafting clear and concise decisions that will serve the lower courts well.

Immediately after the ceremony was a reception, where all the Justices, friends, family and staff mingled, celebrating the new year of the Washington State Supreme Court.

Upcoming Events

January 28, 2015, Diversity in Business Event

The University of Washington's Women's Law Caucus is hosting Diversity in Business, a University of Washington School of Law event, in collaboration with the Washington State Bar Association's Business Law Section.

Diversity in Business is a mixer between attorneys and law students aimed at celebrating the importance of diversity in the legal community. It will begin with a welcome address from WSBA President, Mr. Anthony Gipe. The rest of the evening will be an excellent opportunity to network with law students and attorneys alike. Drinks and appetizers will be provided.

Date: Wednesday, January 28, 2015

Time: 5:30 – 7:30 PM

Place: Gallagher Law Library, University of Washington

Please RSVP ASAP to: uwlawandbusiness@gmail.com

February 12, 2015, Criminal Law Section Networking Happy Hour

Hosted happy hour appetizers and one glass of wine. All members are encouraged to join and learn about the section's upcoming events, learn about potential CLEs of interests, and how members can become more involved in criminal law committees and KCWWL committees.

Date: Thursday, February 12, 2015

Time: 5:00 – 7:00 PM

Place: Columbia Tower Club

February 26, 2015, Mary's Place Job Training and Mentorship Volunteer Event

Please join the King County Washington Women Lawyers for a Winter Job Training and Mentorship Volunteer Event to benefit Mary's Place, the **only** day center for homeless women in King County that accepts women with children.

Date: Thursday, February 26, 2015

Time: 9:30-11:30 AM

Place: Mary's Place, 1830 9th Avenue, Seattle, WA 98101

For more information or to RSVP, contact Civic Affairs Chair Stephanie Marshall at stephanie.ne@gmail.com.

Questions?

We appreciate all of our members and would love to hear your feedback. If you have any questions, suggestions, or ideas please let us know! Please email Communications Chair, Katharine N. Bernstein - katie@knblegal.com.