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CELEBRATING OUR HISTORY AND OUR FUTURE

BY CHRISTIAN F. TORGRIMSON

“With passion and courage, women have taught us that when we band together to advocate for our highest ideals, we can advance our common well-being and strengthen the fabric of our Nation.”

These are the opening words to President Barack Obama’s recent Proclamation on Women’s History Month. I personally find these words inspiring. In March of each year, we remember and celebrate women who have helped to shape the history of our country. It also is an opportunity for us to reflect on our future as women and as leaders.

Perhaps one of the greatest ways we have banded together has been to support the advancement and promotion of women. GAWL certainly is charged with this mission and strives to change the legal profession in our corner of the world. We are inspired by the efforts of women lawyers throughout history and across the country. In 1777, Abigail Smith Adams, wife of second president John Adams and

mother of sixth president John Quincy Adams, wrote that women “will not hold ourselves



Christian Torgrimson

bound by any laws which we have no voice.” Although she may not have seen it in her lifetime, Abigail Smith Adams’ words came to fruition. In 1868, women lawyers became licensed in the United States. In 1890, Wyoming became the first state to allow women to vote, and in 1920, the 19th Amendment was ratified, giving women the right to vote in federal elections. In Georgia, GAWL’s nineteen founders worked hard to gain the right for women to serve on juries. Since then, women have made great strides in American society and continue to break through the glass ceiling, pushing women’s achievements to new heights.

Each March, our country celebrates a select list of women who have achieved new “firsts.” This list of women and their accom-

plishments is astounding. As but a few examples of great women of our time, Sandra Day O’Connor became the first woman appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1981. Madeleine Albright became the first woman U.S. Secretary of State in 1997. Condoleezza Rice became the first African American woman to be appointed Secretary of State in 2005, and in 2008, Hillary Rodham Clinton the only First Lady to ever run for President of the United States, paving the way for future generations of women who dream of becoming President of the United States. I hope it has inspired little girls in every state to pretend to be “president” as well as a lawyer or teacher or doctor.

We can only imagine what the future holds for the women of our generation and generations to come. So long as women continue to band together, in the legal community and the community at large, women will continue to set new “firsts” for women and to advance the common well-being and strength of our nation.

IT’S ABOUT LEADERSHIP

It’s About Leadership is the theme of the GAWL Leadership Academy. What’s this about? It is or it isn’t. The American Heritage Dictionary lists several

definitions for about. A few include: approximately (It is about time to start); almost (Her job is about finished); in possession or innate character of (she kept her wits about

her); in no particular direction (She wandered about with no place to go).

Members of the Leadership Academy Class of 2009 are talented leaders who

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IT'S ABOUT LEADERSHIP

Leadership, from page 1

fit the definition of about as possessing or having innate character. Each of them possessed leadership experience before they enrolled in the academy. Some of them have started their own practices; one of them has been published in a law journal; one of them worked in Zurich, Switzerland, one of them has presented an oral argument before the New York Appellate Division; one of them has an annual Law Camp for youth; and one of

them leads the business unit of a major company. This is only a partial listing of their accomplishments. "WOW" is a frequent expression heard as members share stories of their law practices. These are incredible women and dedicated attorneys.

During the first sessions, held at the Callaway Lodge Conference Center, the students learned about Effective Communication and Styles of Leadership and other relevant topics.

Special thanks to Columbus

attorneys Gwyn Newsome and Stephanie Crosse, Atlanta attorneys Robin Sangston and Elaine Levine, Columbus State University Cunningham Center For Leadership Development Assistant Director Shana Young, and GAWL Board Members: Christian Torgrimson, Amy Quackenboss, Kelly Wilcove, Nicole Andres, Kimberly Childs and Dotty Pritchett for sharing in this first session.

The final sessions will be held at the Margaret Mitchell House in Atlanta on March

27, 2009 and on April 24, 2009. Watch for more details of these sessions in future articles. The GAWL Leadership Academy is about more than becoming an effective leader.

Dorothy M. Pritchett is the Vice President, Leadership on the GAWL Board. She is an Executive Coach with Andrew Grace Associates. To contact Dotty, please call 404-688-5821 or email her at dpritchett@andrewgraceassociates.com.

CELEBRATE OUR COMMUNITY LEADERS AT GAWL'S ANNUAL DINNER MAY 5th at Maggiano's Buckhead

Register now for GAWL's Annual Dinner, which will be held on May 5, 2009 at Maggiano's Buckhead in Atlanta, Georgia at 6:00 p.m. The Annual Dinner is a great opportunity to socialize and network with fellow GAWL members over a glass of wine and a delicious three-course meal. As with all GAWL events, make sure you bring your business cards!

The theme of this year's Annual Dinner will be a celebration of community leadership, and we will be honoring GAWL's members who have offered their services or donated their time to community organizations. Please e-mail Amy Kolczak at kolczak@OG-Law.com the names of any GAWL members who you believe have made a significant impact on the community.

We will start the Annual Dinner with cocktails and networking at 6:00 p.m. and will begin the awards dinner at 7:00 p.m. Registration fees are \$85 (non-members), \$50 (GAWL members) and \$25 (members of the judiciary, public interest attorneys and law students). Please register by April 28th at www.gawl.org.

At the Annual Dinner, GAWL announces the winner of the Kathleen Kessler Award, an award given in honor of the late Kathleen Kessler, an Atlanta attorney who was tragically killed in the 1996 ValuJet Airlines crash in Florida. The Kathleen Kessler Award is GAWL's most prestigious award and

WHAT TO BRING

- Snacks (Individually wrapped)
- Cookies
- Crackers
- Granola Bars
- Fruit Snacks
- Gatorade
- Boxed Juices
- Kid-sized Water Bottles
- Kid-sized Smocks for arts and crafts

is given each year to a female attorney who exhibits a long-term commitment to the practice of law and to the legal community.

Other annual GAWL awards, such as the Visionary Award, the Volunteer Award, and the Outstanding Law

Student Awards also are announced at the Annual Dinner. In addition, the GAWL Foundation scholarship recipients and the members of Leadership Academy class are recognized. Last, but not least, GAWL's next Board will be sworn in at the conclusion of the dinner.

In keeping with our theme of celebrating community leadership, we will also be conducting a drive for Nicholas House at the Annual Dinner. Please bring any of the below with you to the dinner. Note that items should be wrapped and unopened.

Members and supporters of GAWL are invited to attend this signature event.

For more information, please contact Kristi Wallace, Vice President, Special Events on the GAWL Board at [wallacek@gtlaw.com](mailto:w Wallacek@gtlaw.com).