



Collier County Women's Bar Association

**\*NEWSLETTER\***

**COLLIER COUNTY WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION, INC.**

WINTER 2004

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

*By: Jeanne L. Seewald*

This first newsletter of 2004 is arriving during our busy season. Many of us are working hard and being pulled in many directions by responsibilities and commitments. We hope that the receipt of the CCWBA Newsletter provides you with an opportunity to relax and take a few moments to update yourself on our organization. My report for this quarter is that our organization is strong and vibrant. Strong in that our membership continues to grow and represents a diverse group of practitioners in our community. Vibrant in that our members are active and are interested in making a difference through involvement in community projects and through dissemination of information relating to issues that affect our personal and professional lives.

This second edition of our revised newsletter features on page two an article written by Rhea Law entitled "A Successful Lawyer." Rhea is the president and CEO of Fowler White Boggs Banker, a firm of 200 attorneys based in Tampa. She is the only female at the helm of any of Florida's 25 largest law firms, according to a recent ranking by *Florida Trend Magazine*. In particular, Rhea provides insight into the characteristics of lawyers that are valued by law firms. Rhea will be the featured speaker at our lunch meeting on February 25<sup>th</sup> and will be speaking on "Climbing the Power Ladder." Please mark your calendars to attend.

We had a wonderful speaker at our January meeting. Merrily Dean Baker provided us with an Update on Title IX. We received many remarks on the quality of the presentation.

We also received great comments about the lunch buffet at the January meeting. This new lunch format provides several choices for

meeting attendees and we plan to continue this format for the remainder of 2004. We also have been able to reduce the price of lunch for members from \$18 to \$16. Nonmembers and guests will continue to be charged \$18 for lunch.

On page three of this Newsletter you will find information about Carolyn Coukos, our 2003 Woman Attorney of the Year. Also, on page three is information about our Name the Newsletter contest. There still is time to submit your ideas.

February will be the last month for the CCWBA's project to assist Voices for Kids. This has been a very successful project for CCWBA and we appreciate all the work of the Project Coordinator, Jacqueline Buyze.

In March, we will be trying something new with the First Spring Marketing Extravaganza. Come to our March meeting and take advantage of this opportunity to network with CCWBA members and guests and learn about their practice areas and ideas for rainmaking.

Finally, we have some exciting lunch programs coming up this year, including the following: Judge Lauren Miller – A View from the Bench, State Representative Carole Green – Florida Legislative Update, Mary Beth Clary – Update on the American Bar Association and Opportunities for Involvement, and General Master Larry Pivacek – Update on the General Master's Office. Also, Kelly Overstreet Johnson, President-Elect of The Florida Bar, has agreed to come to Naples to speak to our group. We are very excited about Kelly's trip to Collier County and are working with her on a date that fits into her very busy schedule.

We look forward to seeing you at the lunch meeting on February 25<sup>th</sup> at the Collier Athletic Club.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.CCWBA.ORG

**\*There's still time to submit your entry for the Name the Newsletter Contest!\***

**\*See Page 3 for Details\***

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# A SUCCESSFUL LAWYER

By: Rhea F. Law, President and CEO, Fowler White Boggs Banker P.A.



Rhea F. Law

## **Introduction**

Preparation for the practice of law starts with law school. It is not a myth that high grades and participation in law school activities, such as moot court, law review and trial competitions, enhance employment opportunities upon graduation from law school. All of these activities demonstrate to a prospective employer that the student is well rounded and dedicated. However, achieving these criteria is no guarantee of success as a practicing lawyer. From a firm perspective, there are many other criteria which go into achieving a successful career in the law.

Specifically, firms are looking for lawyers who excel in their area of practice, are dependable and independent, enjoy good client relationships including the attraction and management of new clients as well as maintenance and enhancement of existing clients, demonstrate leadership abilities, are team players, are financially productive and are involved in community and professional activities. The following is an overview of some of the characteristics valued by law firms:

## **Technical Expertise**

Excelling in your area of practice

includes knowledge of applicable law and ability to find it promptly and efficiently. It also includes the use of imagination, creativity, and innovation; the ability to write clearly and persuasively and to analyze quickly and accurately. It is the exercise of good judgment and the ability to plan and implement legal strategies. Excellent oral communication skills are a must. Finally, it includes the ability to handle the unexpected and the ability to negotiate.

## **High Ethical Standards**

Ethical behavior in the legal field is mandated and enforced by the Rules of Professional Conduct, and is a basic tenet of the practice of law. A lawyer as a representative of clients, an officer of the court and a public citizen is charged with a special responsibility to insure the quality of justice. In addition, lawyers are required to be competent, prompt and diligent. These high standards are the basis for a lawyer's reputation which should be regarded as his or her most important asset.

## **Productivity**

Defining the productivity of an attorney is more complex than the amount of collected fees. Productivity is an aggregation of value of work produced, billed and collected as well as the efficiency with which work is handled, the number of matters handled, and income generated through working with other lawyers throughout the firm.

## **Fee Generation and Account Management**

Contribution to new client development and retention and expansion of work with existing clients is critical to the success of the firm. This includes maintenance of good and positive relations with existing clients, expansion of business

from existing clients, as well as attracting, retaining and servicing clients whose legal work is handled by multiple offices.

## **Teamwork**

Practicing the team concept, including client sharing, joint marketing, participation in and cooperation on law firm committees, and overall promotion of harmony and goodwill among shareholders and staff is crucial to meeting the long term goals of a law firm. Examples of teamwork include:

- Maintaining good working relationships with both legal and non-legal personnel.
- Lending personal support to all personnel.
- Respecting each lawyer's professional and management judgments.
- Actively supporting the firm's and Practice Groups Goals.
- Promoting and cross-selling other firm lawyers.
- Active recruitment of lawyers.

## **Compliance with Policies of the Firm**

Firm policies are created to enhance the financial and long-term success of the firm. They include time keeping, billing, assignments of work, specialization and following procedures in handling legal matters.

## **Professional and Community Activities**

Firms highly value lawyers that enhance the firm's image and prestige through maintaining good relations with other lawyers, speaking at CLE and other programs, publishing, participating in bar activities, assuming bar and community leadership positions and participation in pro bono activities.

See SUCCESSFUL LAWYER, Page 3

## 2003 WOMAN LAWYER OF THE YEAR



*Carolyn C. Coukos*

Carolyn Coukos was honored as the 2003 Woman Lawyer of the Year by the Collier County Women's Bar Association, Inc. Carolyn is Vice President, Trust Administration at Northern Trust Bank in Naples and manages the Estate Settlement Department.

Carolyn joined Northern Trust in 1997 with 20 years of experience in trust and estate administration and law practice. She received a JD degree, with honors, from Indiana University and a BA degree from the University of Kansas. In law school, she was an editor of the Indiana Law Review and, subsequently, practiced law in Indianapolis for ten years concentrating in trust and estate law and employment law. Carolyn was Vice President and Trust Counsel of Bank One in Indianapolis, editor of the American Bar Association's Section of Taxation Newsletter and listed in Who's Who of American Women. She was one of three finalists selected by the Indiana Judicial Nominating Commission for nomination as judge of the Indiana Tax Court, a statewide appellate court.

She is admitted to practice in Florida and Indiana and is a member of the American, Florida and Collier County Bar Associations. She served as President of the CCWBA during the period 1999-2001 and is currently serving on the Board of Directors and as Assistant Treasurer of FAWL.

We congratulate Carolyn on this honor and thank her for her tireless efforts to advance the CCWBA and the standing of women in the legal community.



*Carolyn Coukos receives award from  
CCWBA President*

### SUCCESSFUL LAWYER

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It is important that lawyers be visible in the community to fulfill the law firm's commitment to the communities in where they are located.

### Conclusion

No one lawyer can exhibit excellence in every characteristic listed, however it is important that each person create their own success story by relying on their personal resources and talents.

If each lawyer prepares themselves through the use of training, practice techniques and implementation, the greater the potential for becoming a successful lawyer.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

**NOTE EVENT LOCATION: COLLIER ATHLETIC CLUB**

**February 25<sup>th</sup> Climbing the Power Ladder**  
Rhea Law, President and CEO  
Fowler White Boggs Banker P.A.

Rhea Law is the only female at the helm of any of Florida's 25 largest law firms, according to a recent ranking by *Florida Trend Magazine*.

**March 24<sup>th</sup> First Spring Marketing Extravaganza**  
Come to our March meeting and take advantage of this opportunity to network with CCWBA members and guests and learn about their practice areas and ideas for rainmaking.

### NAME THE NEWSLETTER CONTEST

Help us name our Newsletter. The Collier County Bar Association has the *Adverse Witness*, The Florida Bar has the *Florida Bar News*, and the Clearwater Bar Association has the *Res Ipsa*. We have many creative members out there so help name our revived Newsletter. Please send your ideas and suggestions to our webmaster, Emily Mayne, at [emayne@fowlerwhite.com](mailto:emayne@fowlerwhite.com) or call her at 239-598-1221. The Board has extended the deadline for submission to March 24<sup>th</sup>. At that time, the Board will review the submissions and announce a winner. The winner of the Name the Newsletter Contest will receive a gift certificate for a nice dinner on the town. Send in those suggestions while you are thinking about it!

