

Hawai'i Women Lawyers

September 2001

You can also find us at: <http://www.hsba.org/sections/HWL/hwl.html>

Upcoming Events

WHAT: Why Get Involved In Politics?
Part 1

WHEN: Thursday, September 20,
noon to 1 p.m.

WHERE: Carlsmith Ball Conference Rm.
1001 Bishop Street
Pacific Tower, 22nd floor

WHO: Lorraine H. Akiba, Esq., State
Chair Democratic Party of
Hawaii

WHY: Come and find out how you can
get involved in politics, a political party or
a political campaign and why you should
consider it.

COST: \$7, includes lunch. RSVP to
Erin Uyeda at 521-3255 and send a \$7
check, payable to Hawaii Women Law-
yers, to her by 9/17, at Pacific Tower,
Suite 1030, 1001 Bishop Street, Hon.
96813.

NEXT UP: Why Get Involved in Politics?
Part 2 Speaker Linda Lingle, Chair, Ha-
waii Republican Party. Thursday, Novem-
ber 1, noon to 1 p.m., Carlsmith Ball.
Watch for further information in our next
newsletter!



Join us at the Hawaii Women's Legal Foundation fundraiser, "The Mayor's Masquerade," a costume (optional) party at the Hilton Hawaiian Village Coral Ballroom, 5:30 p.m., October 20. Tickets are \$100/person with a discounted rate for U.H. Law students. For more information and to make reservations, call 396-8506. Sip champagne, stroll the ballroom (transformed into a bazaar for your pleasure), enjoy the silent auction and food stations while the Mayors and other notables judge the costume contest. Costume categories include "Beauty or the Beast", "Crime and Punishment", and "Class Action" (for group costumes).

You are invited to ...

ULUPONO: A Conference on Violence Against Women

Wednesday-Thursday, October 3-4, 2001

Renaissance Ilikai Hotel Waikiki

Honolulu, Hawaii

ULUPONO (to grow well, to thrive) expresses the commitment to healing and new beginnings that is central to this conference on violence against women. The conference will focus on the many ways that women and girls in Hawaii and the Pacific Basin experience violence in their daily lives. Plenary sessions and workshops are designed to teach skills and facilitate dialogue between participants from the many disciplines and institutions involved in this work, promoting the possibility of **ULUPONO** for women and children who have experienced violence in what are meant to be intimate and safe places.

A WOMAN'S RETREAT

Annette Kaohelauiii and Laura Crites have organized a woman's retreat from October 4 to 7 (Thursday evening to Sunday afternoon) at a beautiful country estate in a secluded valley near Kapaa on Kauai.

IT IS DESIGNED FOR: Professional women who will appreciate the ability to slow down and connect with nature, will enjoy the company of other women, are interested in advancing their own sense of wellness and well-being, and have a spirit of adventure.

ACTIVITIES WILL INCLUDE: Outdoor activities and lectures by Bev Brodie, fitness professional and expert in Hawaiian Huna philosophy; Kimba Aren, widely-known sound therapist; and Ken Carlson, author of *Star Mana: The Healing Energies of Hawaii*.

COST: \$370, includes 3 nights accommodations (double occupancy), meals, lecture fees, ground transportation on Kauai.

RETREAT LEADERS: Annette is a leader in ecotourism and the Sierra Club. She is the owner of Annette's Adventures, a travel business specializing in ecotourism. Laura is a lifelong leader on women's issues. She was the Executive Director of the Family Peace Center and the Women's Financial Resource Center. She is currently developing Aloha Wellness Travel, a travel service focusing on wellness.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO SIGN UP, CALL: Annette at 235-5431 or Laura at 941-8253.

Look inside this month's issue to find out . . .

- what makes us who we are from HWL President Melissa Pavlicek;
- why HSBA Presidential Candidates Douglas Crosier and Dale W. Lee want to be your new President ;
- what's going on in the Legislative Committee;
- how are your communication skills?; and
- who's who on the 2001-2002 HWL Board

President's Message: "What Makes Us Who We Are?"



"Describe an experience that helped shape who you are," said the form I received in the mail from a non-profit organization recently. I serve on the organization's board, and all of its members were asked for such a description - a way to get to know us better.

Many board members referred to acts of kindness and generosity that they had received in childhood or as young adults. Others described witnessing poverty, injustice, or inequality -- either in the U.S. or abroad. (One mentioned motherhood.) For many, the experience appeared at first to be one of little consequence, but ultimately changed whom the person became as an adult and as a lawyer, opening their eyes, changing their perspective.

For me, receiving free gymnastics classes as a teenager in Maui taught me about "paying it forward," long before the book or movie of the same name. In my legal career, it has been the physical pat on the back of a woman attorney friend at lunch hearing the discouraging remarks had a colleague had made to me, and the emotional pat on the back given often in supportive e-mails by HWL board members. Occasionally it has been the exact bit of advice that helped me out of a tough dilemma. Sometimes it is a letter of reference or a phone call to the right person to get me invited to something I'd been wishing to join.

It can take so very little for women attorneys to help -- and change the perspectives of -- their peers, young associates, law students, those who follow in our chosen career. A friendly lunch, an occasional phone call, a greeting card with a heartfelt message of support -- these are the things that, as members of Hawaii Women Lawyers, we can do for those who may have just a bit less experience. A helping hand, the offer of a practical legal tip or the sharing of a similar experience. The kindness and generosity that you show to another woman attorney could be just a moment of your time, but might have impact far beyond what you imagine. I keep a file folder of supportive cards and letters that cheer me on the toughest of days.

Yesterday, on the way back to my office from a meeting, I ran into a woman attorney I admire, who is a partner in a large Hawaii law firm and volunteers tirelessly with charitable and professional organizations. The moment that she stopped for a quick, friendly chat reminded me how far a little kindness could go in a profession where our jobs often require us to be serious and tough advocates. Take a moment to think about what you can do today to help a woman -- or any young attorney -- in this profession. Here are three ideas to do today:

- 1) Sponsor a law student's membership in HWL for a year (it's only \$10!)
E-mail Membership Chair Emi Morita at emorita@hawaii.edu if you want to sponsor a student member.
- 2) Call a woman attorney you read about in the newspaper, the Bar Journal, or the HWL newsletter to tell her you think what's she's doing is important, great, or inspirational.
- 3) Invite a woman attorney in your office to lunch and ask her how her career's going.

Thank you to all of you who do these things and more. Especially for those of you who do these things graciously and unconsciously without ever having received the kindness of an attorney-mentor yourself, we applaud you.

—Melissa T. Paulicek

Former HWL board member Lora Liss passed away last month. She was one of our representatives to the Women's Coalition for a time, was a retired attorney but very active and vocal contributor to the board when she was with us. She became ill with cancer and resigned from the board when she moved to the mainland to be closer to her family. HWL remembers her and offers condolences to her family.



Legislative Committee Report

The HWL legislative committee met on July 28th to discuss a package for the 2002 legislative session. The committee decided to focus on three areas, which were subsequently approved by the Board at its meeting on August 8th. HWL will again use the Women's Coalition as the conduit for our legislative package. The Women's Coalition is having a pre-session retreat in the recreation center Hale at Paki Park (by the zoo) on September 15 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., potluck. All HWL members are welcome to attend.

The legislative committee will continue to work on a mandatory arbitration bill. This proposed legislation is geared towards preserving the statutory rights of employees to remedy workplace discrimination and harassment. HWL'S primary concern is to prevent private forum arbitration from diluting a) the basic rights of individuals to bring their civil rights claims in administrative agencies, and b) the basic remedies for discrimination as provided by statute. The U.S. Supreme Court's recent decision in Circuit City has held that arbitration agreements are enforceable in employment discrimination cases. But key questions remain as to how far such agreements can go toward doing away with the remedies, choice of forum, and other civil rights mandated by statute.

The legislative committee will also work on a bill to provide new avenues of redress for students who suffer unlawful harassment at their schools. The suggested focus is to provide a right of action through the Hawaii Civil Rights Commission but other options will also be explored.

The legislative committee will work on a bill to address the plight of victims of domestic violence who are subject to eviction from their homes because an incident of domestic violence takes place there. Such instances occur even if the victim obtains a protective order and/or presses criminal charges against the abuser and the abuser does not or no longer resides in the home. The suggested focus is to make such evictions unlawful. This bill may be introduced through the domestic violence legislative package of the State Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

Anyone interested in participating on or providing input to the legislative committee should send their email address to Shawna Sodersten at shawnas@stoptheviolence.org

Joy Miyasaki's Notes from the July Brown Bag . . .



How Are Your Communication Skills?

"Meet me at the library at 9," may sound simple enough, but do you know which library, where at the library, 9 am or 9 pm?, Keith Kashiwada asked us. What's worse, he said, is that a breakdown in communication usually leaves both you and the other person angry. And, how do you correct a miscommunication? By communication, which may lead to further miscommunication (and perhaps litigation).

Kashiwada, the speaker at our July lunch, teaches personal and public speaking in the UH Manoa system. "Communication is the most important skill you will ever learn," he told us. It's difficult to teach because it's teaching you something you already know. But it is a skill, he said, and you can get better by practicing. He shared some tips with us on effective communication.

An important factor is the ability to understand the other person's perspective. "Is perception reality?," Kashiwada asked. While our perception may or may not be reality, we sometimes forget that someone else's perception may be different from our own. Part of the communication process is to determine the other person's perception. One of the problems, Kashiwada pointed out, is that "too often opinion is mistaken for fact."

Communication is a two-way street. If you're the speaker, you need to be a sender and a receiver. And, while it may not be as obvious, if you're the listener, you need to be a receiver and a sender. Effective communication is the "mutual responsibility" of both parties, Kashiwada said. As a rule of thumb, you need to listen twice as much as you speak. Hence, the adage, "that's why you have two ears and one mouth."

The brain processes information faster than a speaker can convey it. So, to be a good listener, you need to slow your brain down. To be a good speaker, you need to work hard at keeping the listener's attention. To be engaging as a speaker, keep in mind that different people process information differently.

All in all, there are lots of stumbling blocks to effective communication. Sometimes, there's a cultural aspect. Take the following exchange, for example: "Keith, you want something to drink?" "No, thanks." "You sure?" "Nah." "You sure?" "Uh, okay." Local style, if you're offered something, you might decline once, or even twice, before accepting. Obviously, it helps when both host and guest understand this.

Or sometimes, you need to know when nothing means something, as in the following exchange: "What's wrong?" "Oh, nothing..."

Hawai'i Women Lawyers

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HWL Officers and Board Members 2001-2002



2001-2002 HWL Board (left to right): Lane Hornfeck, Joy Miyasaki, Julia Morgan, Joanne Grimes, April Wilson-South, Yvonne Lau, Shawna Sodersten, Michele Loudermilk, Malia Taum (obscured), Lauren Sharkey, Helen Zeldes (obscured), Emi Morita, Melissa Pavlicek, and Lynne McGivern

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