

SURVEYS OF HAWAII'S WOMEN LAWYERS

For information on the current number of women attorneys in Hawai'i and other demographic information, please see the Hawaii State Bar Association's Home Page "About Us" "Statistics and Survey Results." The website address is www.hsba.org

1980 SURVEY

Number of women licensed to practice in Hawaii: 225

Number of responses: 114 completed questionnaires

The Survey

In 1982 The Hawaii Women Lawyers Foundation (THWLF) solicited funds to pay for the 1980 survey of women licensed in Hawaii. The purpose of the survey was to collect information related to demographics, education, employment, professional qualifications and activities.

Demographics

Half of the respondents were less than 32 years old, which approximated national data obtained from the American Bar Association. Over 40% were Caucasian as compared with 26% of the state's population. Japanese respondents represented 22% which was close to the state's population of 23.5%. Chinese respondents comprised 12% as compared with 6% of the state's population. Hawaiian's and part-Hawaiians represented 7% as compared with 19% of the state's population.

Family Life

Over half of the respondents were married to lawyers and one-third were married to non-law professionals. Most of the respondents indicated their family is twice as important to them as work and friends. Almost two-thirds of the respondents had no children. Of those with children, 51% were school aged, 30% pre-school aged. Over half of the respondents who planned to have more children say they will return to their careers within six months after maternity leave. One-third said they would take no maternity leave.

Reasons for Choosing Law as a Career

Respondents claimed "challenging work" and "a way to change society and help people" as the main reasons for choosing law as a career.

Professional Activities

Three-fourths of the respondents belong to at least one legal and/or community organization. Two-thirds support mandatory continuing legal education with responses evenly split on the issue of mandatory pro bono work.

Career Experience

Three out of 10 of those in private practice are associates in private firms; 14% in solo practice; and less than 5% are partners in private practice. Of those working for the government, approximately 25% are deputy attorneys general and 25% are deputy corporation counsel. The areas of emphasis are civil law, litigation, family-juvenile law, and real estate.

Discrimination

The majority felt they were not discriminated against by either male or female clients. Over half report being discriminated against by peers, court or administrative workers, judges and other job-related persons.

Career Plans

Four out of ten respondents wish to become a judge. One of five wants to seek political office. The majority of respondents would like to be in business.