WIP and the world react to Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson

By Andrea C. Farney, Esq. and Maraleen Shields, WIP Diversity Committee co-chairs

Another glass ceiling broke on April 7, 2022, when the Senate voted 53-47 to confirm Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson as the 116th justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. Judge Jackson will be the first Black woman to serve on the court established 233 years ago. She will take the seat of Justice Stephen Breyer, who is expected to remain on the court until the justices take their summer recess in late June or early July.

Judge Jackson's credentials for the court are impeccable. She graduated magna cum laude from Harvard University and cum laude from Harvard Law School, where she was also an editor of the Harvard Law Review. She clerked for three federal judges, including Justice Breyer. Judge Jackson worked as Vice Chair of the U.S. Sentencing Commission. Before joining the Sentencing Commission, Judge Jackson worked for three years as Of Counsel at Morrison & Foerster LLP. She served as a district judge of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia from 2013 to 2021. In 2021, she was confirmed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. In addition to being the first Black woman to serve on the Supreme Court, Judge Jackson will be the first justice to have experience as a federal public defender and is the first justice since Justice Thurgood Marshall with extensive defense experience.

Judge Jackson was born in Washington D.C., grew up in Florida and attended public school in the Miami-Dade area. She is 51 years old, married and the mother of two daughters.

Thoughts from WIP members

We asked the members of WIP to tell us what the nomination and confirmation of Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson to the Supreme Court of the United States meant to them. The responses were as heterogeneous, eloquent and passionate as our WIP community. Thank you for your indefatigable contributions to the discourse from your Voices & Views editors, Jennifer Ellis and Nicole O’Hara.

I have long felt that the barriers for women of color indicate that we do not live in a meritocracy. In other words, we know and see talented, well-educated and successful lawyers who are not selected for employment, advanced for leadership or elected to office as jurists. Perhaps the barrier was race and gender? This question was frequently answered in the affirmative for me. When Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson was nominated for associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States it brought tears to my eyes. This nomination sends a message that an eminently qualified black woman can ascend to the Supreme Court of the United States because of her intelligence, experience and excellence. I am so grateful to President Biden and the senators, both Republican and Democrat, who support her nomination. This nomination is a signal that we can overcome the barri-

Continued on page 2
Voices & Views

Voices & Views

ers of race and sex bias in our profession. An added point of satisfaction for me is the fact Judge Ketanji Brown-Jackson served the rule of law by being a federal public defender. As a past public interest attorney myself, I know how hard it is to represent the poor, the marginalized and the accused. Her perspective on this work will bring insight and richness to the court that it has never seen before. This is an incredible moment in our country’s and our profession’s history. Good luck Judge Brown Jackson!

Sharon R. López, Triquetra Law (Lancaster)

As a former federal public defender, I have closely followed Judge Jackson’s service on the US Sentencing Commission, the District Court and the DC Circuit. She was the first Defender to serve on the Sentencing Commission. She is one of few former defenders serving on the District and Circuit Courts. She will be the first former defender to serve on the SCOTUS. Her experience representing indigent criminal defendants will provide a valuable perspective to the SCOTUS as they decide issues of importance to the criminal justice system. Her experience representing the poor, the marginalized and the racially and ethnically diverse in our society will add further to the viewpoint she will bring to the Supreme Court. For the first time, African American girls in America will see someone who looks just like them sitting on the highest court in the United States. What a valuable tool to aid in diversifying the legal profession!

Melinda C. Ghilardi, Munley Law PC (Scranton)

While Judge Brown Jackson is certainly not the first (or only) Black woman qualified for this position, she is the first to be nominated. For better or worse, this is a historic moment. Many were quick to assume a Black woman could not possibly be qualified for this post with charges of the eventual nominee being a quota hire. Once nominated, some were quick to discount what would otherwise be seen as impeccable qualifications. Suddenly, culture wars and ancillary matters having nothing to do with being a judge have taken center stage. For many in our profession, we are familiar with the need to be extremely qualified, continually prove our qualifications and to do it all with an unflappable smile. In short, my feelings about the nomination of Judge Brown Jackson are mixed. I am incredibly proud of what she has accomplished and all that she has and will continue to endure to make history. She was built for this moment. I am also sad that some seem intent on denying her clear qualifications for this post. This is an important step forward, but there is much room for growth.

Maraleen D. Shields (Lehigh County)

In a society that used law to say, “no” to African Americans and all women…

In 1796, when American women were not permitted to engage in the practice of law, Lucy Terry filed a series of lawsuits within the state of Vermont to protect the property interests of her husband. She argued against two attorneys before Samuel Chase, a U.S. Supreme Court justice. The historical record states that as the first African American woman to argue before any court, her win was further complemented by Justice Chase’s statement: Lucy’s argument was better than he had heard from any Vermont lawyer.

In 1872, nearly a century after Mrs. Terry’s articulation for justice, Charlotte E. Ray graduated from law school and completed her application to the District of Columbia Bar using only her initials (C.E. Ray). She not only became the first African American woman lawyer, but the first woman admitted to the D.C. Bar. Several decades later, Constance Baker Motley, became the first African American woman attorney to argue a case before the Supreme Court, and the

Continued on page 3
Thoughts from WIP members
Continued from page 2

first to serve as a federal judge.

...Joe Biden’s nomination and the senatorial confirmation is not only timely, but an absolute yes!

Dana Y. King, The Law Office of Dana Y. King LLC (Montgomery County)

Pride and Shame. Those are the two reactions I have to the confirmation hearings for Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson’s nomination to be elevated to the United States Supreme Court. Pride that a stellar candidate, who has faced the challenges of being a woman of color in a profession that has historically been unwelcoming and downright hostile, is finally being considered for our highest court. That pride is outweighed by the shame I feel for the legal profession over the degrading treatment Judge Jackson experienced during this process. The behavior of many of the senators was inexcusable, particularly those who are lawyers expected to abide by the rules of professional conduct. While Judge Jackson conducted herself with poise in the face of relentless attacks, lawyer senators harassed and sought to intimidate her. They demonstrated disrespect by rudely interrupting the nominee and mischaracterizing her record. They ridiculed her work as a public defender, a role that ensures equal access to justice for those who face obstacles to representation. They were unprofessional, discourteous and uncivil towards her as a sitting federal judge. They engaged in conduct that our profession usually condemns; it is not acceptable. Judge Jackson and we deserve better.

Francine Friedman Griesing, Griesing Law (Philadelphia)

I am honored to witness this long overdue historic moment. I am excited for all the little brown girls who see Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson’s accomplishment and believe they can achieve the same.

Stephanie F. Latimore, Legislative Reference Bureau (Harrisburg)

The nomination and confirmation of Judge Jackson to the U.S. Supreme Court is such a glimpse of hope and promise. I am so grateful to have been able to witness this moment, even from afar. Her poise, intellect, and patience inspire me to be a better lawyer. Thank you for persevering Judge Jackson! I can’t wait to call you justice, to see you on the bench and to read your opinions!

Andrea C. Farney, Triquetra Law (Lancaster)
The Comeback:
A Triumphant Return to Work Post-Pandemic

Voices & Views
Pennsylvania Bar Association
Commission on Women in the Profession

2022 Annual Conference
Wednesday, May 11
Hershey Resort, Hershey, PA

Voices & Views Spring 2022 • Pennsylvania Bar Association • Commission on Women in the Profession

SCHEDULE

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.  WIP Business and Breakfast Meeting
Commission Co-Chairs: Stephanie F. Latimore and Jennifer S. Coatsworth

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.  “Sell” is NOT a Dirty Word: How to Craft Your Purpose and Passion Story to Promote Yourself
Learning how to network, sell and differentiate yourself is key to growing a book of business. This skillset is something most lawyers are expected to know but are not taught. Women tend to have a hard time talking about themselves, especially when facing gender bias in a male-dominated industry. Christine Miles, founder and CEO of EQuipt, a training and consulting company, will show you how to tap into your purpose and passion and craft a compelling story that builds connection and differentiates you in your business development efforts. In this interactive session, Christine will use real examples from the audience to show how to effectively promote yourself and why it’s imperative for women lawyers to master it.
Presenter: Christine Miles, CEO, EQuipt-People
Does not quality for CLE credit

10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.  Break

10:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.  Surviving and Thriving – CLE 301
This panel will delve into the effects the pandemic had on all facets of the practice of law and our lives as female attorneys. All of us experienced adversity in some way, shape or form over the last two years, and each of us had a unique way of handling that adversity. Learn how some of our colleagues dealt with the stressors of a global pandemic on their professional and personal lives and how you can ensure that you are taking care of yourself so that you become a better lawyer and advocate for your firm, your clients and, most importantly, yourself.
Panelists:
• Hon. Deborah A. Kunselman, Superior Court of Pennsylvania
• Tara A. Burns, Ogletree Deakins Nash Smoak & Stewart PC
• Elizabeth R. Triscari, Pennsylvania-American Water Company

Christine Miles

WIP Registration Fee
Includes WIP programming, WIP breakfast, WIP annual luncheon and WIP reception. CLE credits are included.*

PBA Members .....................$165
Non-PBA Members ...........$195
Law Students ....................$  40

*Please note: You must register for the full WIP conference to obtain CLE credits.
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2022 WIP Annual Conference

- Moderator: Laurie J. Besden, Executive Director, Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers
  1.0 Ethics CLE credit

12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.   WIP Annual Luncheon and Awards Presentations


The Commission on Women in the Profession will present the Anne X. Alpern Award to Christine H. McClure, Knox McLaughline Gornall & Sennett.

The Lynette Norton Award will be presented to Virginia H. McMichael, Appellate Law Group LLC.

Keynote Speaker: Jennifer Arbittier Williams

2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.   Building Resilient Teams – CLE 302

Lawyers are accustomed to high-stress, fast-moving work environments. The pandemic brought additional challenges and revealed the necessity of building resilient teams. As we “comeback” from the pandemic, let’s take a close look at the critical elements of building resilient teams. This panel will share strategies for building a culture of resilience and well-being plans for individuals, teams and organizations. Come and learn best practices to help foster team resiliency in your law practice.

Panelists:
- Rachel E. King, Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney PC
- Sharon R. López, Triquetra Law
- Marilou E. Watson, Fox Rothschild LLP

1.0 Ethics CLE credit

3:00 p.m. – 3:45 p.m   Break

3:45 P.M. – 5:00 p.m.

Compensation Conversation

Join us for a conversation about all facets of compensation – how (and when) to ask for a promotion, negotiate compensation during a job change or after a temporary hiatus, etc.

Panelists:
- Jan P. Levine, Troutman Pepper
- Liana Walters, Pennsylvania State Senate
- Moderator: Sarah C. Yerger, Law Office of Sarah C. Yerger

Does not quality for CLE credit

5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.   Reception and Networking Opportunity

(Speakers are current at time of printing but subject to change.)

Get the Annual Meeting brochure. Register online.

SAVE THE DATE!

Mark your calendars now and plan to join us for the PBA Commission on Women in the Profession’s 2022 Fall Retreat Friday and Saturday, Nov. 4-5 The Hotel Hershey
Erie attorney Christine H. McClure to be recognized for her significant professional impact on women in the legal profession

Voices & Views

Christine McClure
Anne X. Alpern Award

The PBA Commission on Women in the Profession (WIP) will present its annual Anne X. Alpern Award to Erie attorney Christine H. McClure of Knox McLaughlin Gornall & Sennett PC, on May 11 during the WIP Annual Conference held as part of the PBA Annual Meeting.

The Alpern Award is presented annually to a female lawyer or judge who demonstrates excellence in the legal profession and who makes a significant professional impact on women in the law. Established in 1994, the award was named for Anne X. Alpern, Pennsylvania’s attorney general in 1959 and the first woman state attorney general in the nation.

McClure has the distinction of being the first woman to be elected to her firm’s board of directors. She concentrates in estate planning, elder law, representation of borrowers and lenders in business transactions, general business counsel, municipal and school district law. In addition, she is certified to practice in front of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit and the U.S. Supreme Court, and she is AV Preeminent Peer Review Rated. She is a frequent lecturer for her firm’s annual Municipal Law Symposium.

Her career highlights include winning a precedent-setting case before the U.S. Supreme Court that determined Continued on page 7

Radnor attorney Virginia Hinrichs McMichael to receive PBA Commission on Women in the Profession Norton Award

Voices & Views

Virginia McMichael
Lynette Norton Award

The PBA Commission on Women in the Profession will present its annual Lynette Norton Award to Radnor attorney Virginia Hinrichs McMichael on May 11 during the WIP Annual Conference held as part of the PBA Annual Meeting in Hershey.

The Norton Award was created in memory of Lynette Norton, a founding member of the PBA Commission on Women in the Profession, who died in 2002. Norton was an advocate for young women in the legal profession and worked to promote literacy and women’s rights. The award is designed to recognize and encourage female attorneys who excel in litigation skills and who are devoted to mentoring female lawyers.

Founder of Appellate Law Group LLC, McMichael is a female entrepreneur whose firm represents clients in complex civil appeals in the state and federal appellate courts in Pennsylvania. The firm handles appeals in a variety of areas, including business disputes, real estate, personal injury, professional malpractice and family law. McMichael is also a founding board member of Women Owned Law, a national organization dedicated to connecting and advancing women entrepreneurs in the law.

Continued on page 7
a certificate of deposit is not a security and is therefore not subject to anti-fraud provisions; arranging for the world-renowned ceramic artwork of a deceased Benedictine Monk to continue to be sold through a private gallery with the proceeds going to a branch of the Boston Foundation that assists struggling artists; and arguing a successful appeal before the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania on behalf of a school district to establish the correct seniority date to be used in a teacher suspension.

Active in the PBA, McClure has been a member of the WIP since 2010. Her professional involvement includes serving as a voting member of the PBA House of Delegates from 1993 to 2001, past vice president and current secretary of the Pennsylvania Bar Foundation, and trustee and secretary of the Pennsylvania Bar Trust and Pennsylvania Bar Insurance Fund. Other highlights include serving as the first woman PBA zone 7 governor, chair of the foundation’s Silent Auction Committee, member of the PBA Task Force on House of Delegates Term Limits and member of the PBA Task Force on Recommended Revisions to the Pennsylvania Code of Judicial Conduct. She is the current vice chair of the Judicial Campaign Advertising Committee.

A member of the Erie County Bar Association, McClure was the first woman to receive the Erie County Bar Association’s Chancellor of the Bar Award. In addition, she was the second woman elected to serve as president of the association. She also serves as chair of the Erie County Law Foundation.

Her accolades include receiving the President’s Award and the Board of Governor’s Service Award from PBA, Women Who Achieve Award from PNC Bank and Cornerstone Award for Women in Law Award from Chatham University. She was named a Women Making History Honoree by Mercy Center for Women.

Contributing to her local Erie community, McClure has served as board chair of Springhill Retirement Community; chair of Brevillier Village Foundation Inc.; board president of Ball Pavilion Inc.; governance committee member of Asbury Communities; and president of Arts Erie.

McClure graduated from Chatham University, where she served on the board of trustees, and Villanova University School of Law.

**Anne X. Alpern Award recipient Christine McClure**

*Continued from page 6*

Within the PBA, McMichael is a member of the Commission on Women in the Profession, Appellate Advocacy Committee, Civil Litigation Section, Family Law Section and Solo and Small Firm Section.

Active in the mentoring program for the Philadelphia Bar Association, McMichael shares her experience to provide guidance to young attorneys regarding appellate issues, career goals and litigation strategy. She also supports The Appellate Project, an organization that works to create opportunities for law students of color who aspire to become appellate lawyers and judges.

“Although she has achieved professional success, what distinguishes Virginia is her kindness, resilience and positive outlook on life,” said her award nominator. “She has been a guidepost for me in my career as a young female attorney, working mother and businesswoman.”

McMichael is also a board member of the American Bar Association’s (ABA) Council of Appellate Lawyers and serves as chair of the board’s Solo and Small Firm Practice Committee. Locally, she serves on the Philadelphia Bar Association’s Appellate Law Committee.

A frequent author and lecturer on appellate law and practice, McMichael has published articles in the ABA’s Appellate Issues, the PBA’s The Pennsylvania Lawyer magazine and PBA Civil Litigation newsletter and Law.com’s The Legal Intelligencer. In addition, she has participated on continuing legal education panels for the Pennsylvania Bar Institute, Philadelphia Bar Association, Delaware County Bar Association and League of Women Voters.

She has an AV Preeminent Peer Review Rating by Martindale-Hubbell and a “Superb” rating by Avvo.

McMichael graduated with high honors in English from Middlebury College in Middlebury, Vt. She received her law degree from the University of Texas School of Law in Austin, Texas, where she was a senior editor of the Texas International Law Journal.

**Lynette Norton Award recipient Virginia McMichael**

*Continued from page 6*
President Kathleen Wilkinson welcomed the panel to International Women’s Day, a program co-sponsored by the PBA Commission on Women in the Profession and the Minority Bar Committee. President Wilkinson stated that the PBA was recognizing this global holiday that recognizes women’s incredible achievements, raises awareness and encourages others to advocate for gender equality. This year’s theme was #BreakTheBias, to eliminate bias, stereotypes and discrimination and create gender quality in workplaces, communities and society.

The first National Women’s Day was established in 1909 when 15,000 women flooded the streets of New York City to march for better working conditions, pay and voting rights. The holiday spread to several countries around the world, with the goal of educating and empowering all women.

President Wilkinson quoted world-esteemed tennis player Serena Williams: “Every woman’s success should be an inspiration to another. We’re strongest when we cheer each other on.”

Women in the Profession Co-chairs Jennifer Coatsworth and Stephanie Latimore moderated the program. Panelists from around the commonwealth included: Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justice Sallie Mundy; Pennsylvania Superior Court President Judge Emeritus Susan Peikes Gantman; Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas Judge Kim Berkley-Clark; Montgomery County Court of Common Pleas Judge Cheryl Austin; Aurora Austriaco, partner at Valentine Austriaco, past president of the Chicago Bar Association, past president of the National Conference of Bar Presidents (NCBP); and Jeraldyn Laurence, founder of a Lauren Law, family law firm in Somerset, New Jersey, and incoming president of the New Jersey State Bar Association.

The panel answered a series of questions and exchanged helpful advice and quotes.

Career Paths & Obstacles Overcome

Justice Mundy started her career clerking for a county judge in a rural county. She went into private practice, doing defense work. After starting her family, she then shifted to the plaintiff’s side of the practice. She ran for Pennsylvania Superior Court and was successful, where she served from 2010 until 2016, when the governor appointed her to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. She later ran for the position for a full term. Her advice and quote for the day is: “It’s not where you start, it’s where you finish.”

President Judge Emeritus Gantman observed the dramatic changes in the number of women lawyers in 45 years. She observed that the first woman to pass the Illinois Bar in 1869 was Myra Bradwell, but she was not admitted because it was thought that a woman’s role was to be a wife and mother. In Bradwell v. State of Illinois, in an 1873 decision, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the lower court and held that the practice of law was not one of the privileges and immunities granted by the 14th Amendment. Bradwell was never allowed to practice during her lifetime.

When Judge Gantman became a lawyer and later a judge, she became a role model to other women. She pointed to other early women judges in the commonwealth as trailblazers, such as Judge Donetta Ambrose and Judge Anita Brody, state court judges who became federal judges.

Judge Gantman noted that Philadelphia and Allegheny Counties were the first counties to have women judges. She also noted her work as first law clerk, then with the Montgomery County district’s attorney office, then with Cozen

Continued on page 9
International Women’s Program

Continued from page 8

O’Connor, where she worked four and a half days so that she could balance her work with her family. Judge Gantman’s advice is that women can do anything they want, but they can’t always go it at the same time. She quoted Justice O’Connor, who, when asked how many women should be on the Supreme Court, replied, “Nine.”

President Judge Clark spoke about becoming the first woman of color to become an Allegheny Court of Common Pleas Judge. She started in the Allegheny County District Attorney’s Office, where there was only one other woman of color. Although she was told women did not try homicide cases, she began to get these cases and tried more than many others.

Judge Allen was first appointed judge by the governor, then she wanted to run for judge. She described many uphill challenges that she faced. She was highly successful, winning the primary and then the general election. Because the vote was tied when she ran for president judge, the Supreme Court broke the tie.

Judge Allen discussed how, after being nominated by staff in the Allegheny County Family Division of the Family Court, President Judge Clark received the William H. Rehnquist Award in 2017 by Chief Justice John Roberts, given to a state court judge by the National Center for State Courts judges. She had the opportunity to meet Justice Ginsberg at that time.

Judge Austin also pointed to Judge Clark as president of the Pennsylvania Conference of State Court Judges and gave opportunities to other judges during her term. Judge Austin entered the practice of law as a second career. She served in the ROTC at Northwestern University and graduated as a Navy captain before she went to law school. She is the first in her family to go to college. Her parents left the south and encouraged her to get an office job. She went to Northwestern, just outside Chicago, when, in 1975, students were commissioned as officers. Judge Austin firmly believes that opportunities come disguised as hard work. She stated, “You have to be ready when those doors open.” She did not know what to expect, had no one in the military, but she was determined. After seven years of active duty, she became a reservist. When she felt that people were underestimating her, she decided to go to law school, at the age of 36. She was empowered when she passed the bar. She moved to Montgomery County, was a Montgomery County assistant district attorney, public defender and county solicitor. When it was time for her to become a judge, she had all the credentials she needed, particularly her impact on the local community. She recommends “keeping all doors open” and helping others through those doors. Her daughter is now in law school.

Aurora Austriaico would not have imagined she would have been president of the Chicago Bar or the NCBP when she came to the U.S. from the Philippines as an eight year old, the youngest of eight children. She went to law school because she became interested in the law and experienced discrimination and micro aggression as an Asian. She went to law school at night and became a citizen. She worked with a small firm and was encouraged to participate in bar association activities. Her supervisor agreed to reduce her hours if she continued to do bar work and give back to the community. She committed to working her way up to the president of the Chicago Bar, president of NCBP and today she is on the ABA Board of Governors. Her oldest daughter is also a lawyer.

Jeralyn Laurence wanted to be a lawyer because she talked law with her father, who was a detective. She went to Kean College (now University), and her paths crossed with President Wilkinson. She had trouble with the LSAT but her grades were excellent. After starting law school out of state, she transferred to Seton Hall Law School in New Jersey. Her advice is: “You do not always have to be the smartest, but you must work hard in order to be successful.”

After law school, a judge she worked with suggested she get active in the bar association, which she did. At that time in New Jersey, there were changes in alimony, and she was

Continued on page 10
International Women’s Program

Continued from page 9

able to work on passing new legislation in 2014. Being interested in legislation, she kept moving up in the New Jersey Bar. “Putting lawyers first” will be one of her mottos when she becomes bar president, so that lawyers can focus on the good and what has to be changed in order for lawyers to reduce stress.

Thoughts on Gender Parity

Justice Mundy noted that efforts of more senior women in the bar have made a platform for younger members to have a start on gender parity. She said women lawyers should support each other and highlight each other’s accomplishments.

Judge Gantman noted the dramatic shift in district attorneys’ offices between the 1970s and the 1990s. In the 1970s, women in DA’s offices were not permitted to wear slacks or have a homicide case if pregnant. To accommodate women balancing practice of law with child-rearing, there have been shifts allowing job sharing and the ability to work part-time in courts. While balancing career and family, Judge Gantman tried to consolidate her time by planning time for herself and doing errands on her way home, making a point not to go out again until the next day. She recommended leaving a half hour to yourself each day to step away from the practice of law.

President Kathleen Wilkinson’s focus on attorney wellness and her “Cape May mindfulness tours” were mentioned by Judge Gantman and Jennifer Coatsworth as something to do to reduce stress. Wilkinson suggested that such tours could be done with Jeralyn Lawrence, incoming New Jersey State Bar president.

Judge Allen noted that while there is still a need to focus on racial equity and inclusion, women of color must break through two barriers: the color barrier and the gender barrier. She first defines herself as a black person in America and second as a woman. Most barriers to lawyers are due to race and ethnicity, no matter how well an individual performs. She also noted the pay differentials based on race, using Pittsburgh as an example. There are no women or men of color on many courts and few women and men of color on committees and commissions of various courts.

Judge Austin also suggested we make opportunities for other women and be in a position to make things happen. She has always tried to mentor and bring people along. She urged everyone to “be the change.”

Aurora also gave statistics and noted disparate income levels for women of color and Asians.

Continued on page 11
Aurora noted that the pandemic resulted in numerous women leaving the work force due to children and other factors. She urged all women to pull other women up. She told of women still being mistaken for paralegals or court reporters when in court.

Jeralyn Laurence learned early how to be successful at a big firm; bringing in business is always key in private practice.

Advice to Your Younger Self

The panel discussed using mindfulness strategies, one of the initiatives being focused on this year, and being bold when others think we aren’t lawyers rather than wondering why.

Judge Gantman makes lists of tasks and does the hardest ones first. She recommended having a sense of humor and letting people who need a helping hand talk. She pointed to Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers and other programs about attorney wellness.

Judge Allen listens to music on her way to work in the morning to put her in a good frame of mind.

Judge Austin’s advice was to think things through, ask for help and delegate where possible.

Aurora recommended taking risks, not being afraid to fail, being yourself, being a servant-leader, listening with intent and not being afraid to ask. If you do not ask, you do not get anything.

Jeralyn said to be a consensus-builder, give extensions and set better boundaries.

What We Learned During the Pandemic

The panel discussed better uses of technology, having time to be home with family and how to shine a light on the positive and negative.

Jeralyn thinks Zoom has been the silver lining, and we should think about what is worth going back to. Even clients have been better served with virtual meetings. Do we need to travel for a brief meeting or could it have been done by email? Do we want in-person events so we can socialize again?

Aurora noted we lost people, could not be around friends or relatives and now realize that mental health is important and there is no stigma. There is a labor shortage, and we are looking for lawyers more often. The downside of virtual is making us all constantly busy. We should try to be able to spend time, reflect on our families and try to accommodate attorneys where possible.

Judge Austin likes the fact that virtual technology lets more people come to court. Judge Allen echoed those thoughts and described court proceedings via zoom in Allegheny County. She agreed a downside was working all day long with no breaks due to the use of technology.

Judge Gantman agreed with the advances helping the courts achieve access to justice. She noted being able to focus on activities virtually but missed interaction with friends and family.

The program closed with sharing of more quotes and breakout sessions with the panel. One quote seemed to be applicable to the panel: “Don’t allow kindness to be mistaken for weakness.”

In closing, President Wilkinson noted the great turn-out and thanked the panel, who did an excellent job with the theme “breaking the bias.” The biggest takeaway message is that all women judges and lawyers should support one another in order to succeed.
WIP wellness luncheon series

The WIP Quality of Life subcommittee continues its series of virtual wellness lunches. Bring your own lunch and join us to have an open discussion about the unique issues women lawyers face every day. All sessions begin at noon and end by 1 p.m. The session dates and topics for the rest of the year are listed below. We hope to see you there!

May 6
“Put on your oxygen mask first”
Finding time for fitness/wellness
Moderated by Andrea Farney

July 8
“Thriving in both life and work”
Balancing relationships and career
Moderated by Anne John

Sept. 9
“Playing the game”
Navigating interoffice politics
Moderated by Kim Meyer

Nov. 4
“Making your voice matter”
Paving the way for inclusivity in firm culture
Moderated by Francine Friedman Griesing

Click here for the schedule with Zoom links.

WIP book group reading list

The WIP Book Group has been steadily gathering steam since its genesis less than 10 years ago. Since then, some emotionally and mentally challenging works have led to stimulating and rewarding group discussions, currently led by Hon. Stephanie Domitrovich and Keri Schantz. Below is a list of the books selected in the past. Now is a great time to catch up, in anticipation of what’s to come!

2013-14:
“Lean In” by Sheryl Sandberg
“Wonder Women: Sex, Power and the Quest for Perfection” by Deborah Spar

2014-15:
“My Beloved World” by U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor
“What Works for Women at Work” by Joan C. Williams and Rachel Dempsey

2015-16:
“The House Girl” by Tara Conklin
“Still Alice”, by Lisa Genova
“Notorious RBG: The Life and Times of Ruth Bader Ginsberg” by Irin Carmon & Shana Knizhnik

2016-17:
“The Big Short: Inside the Doomsday Machine” by Michael Lewis

2017-18:
“Feminist Fight Club: An Office Survival Manual (For a Sexist Workplace)” by Jessica Bennett

2018-19:
“Dear Madam President: An Open Letter to the Women Who Will Run the World” by Jennifer Palmieri

2019-20:
“Daughters of a Nation: A Black Suffragette Historical Romance Anthology” by Lena Hart, Piper Huguely, Kianna Alexander and Alyssa Cole
“The Woman’s Hour: The Great Fight to Win the Vote” by Elain Weiss

2020-2021:
The ABA Judges Journal

2021-2022:
“Conversation with Uncommon Women: Insights from Women Who’ve Risen Above Life’s Challenges to Achieve Extraordinary Success” by Ellie Wymard
PBA Commission on Women in the Profession Leadership 2021-22
Co-Chairs..........................Stephanie Latimore*, Jennifer Coatsworth
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Contribute to Voices & Views
The editors of Voices & Views encourage our membership to contribute articles and announcements, including articles on your area of practice, topics relating to women and the law, book reviews, save-the-date notices, members in the news and photos of members at events.

The submission deadline for the next issue is Sept. 23, 2022.

Please send information, news and articles to the co-editors:
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