



PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

BY JUNE D. COLEMAN

“Something which we think is impossible, is not impossible in another decade.”

- Constance Baker Motley

As I sit down to write this month’s President’s Message, I am amazed at the point in time that we find ourselves. We are at a milestone in American History where a woman and an African American are running for President. Regardless of your political ideology, this is a bellwether moment in United States history. With February being Black History Month, it seems fitting that we look at women – African American women attorneys– who have helped the United States get to where we are today.

Charlotte Ray was the first African American woman to become an attorney in the United States, when she was admitted to practice in the District of Columbia in 1872. Racial prejudices proved too strong, and she could not maintain a private practice. By 1879, she returned to New York, where she was born, and taught in public schools.

One of the first African American women who stands out in legal history is Jane Bolin. In 1931, she was the first African American woman to graduate from Yale’s law school. Notably, despite graduating in the top 20 students in her class, her advisor at Wellesley College discouraged her from pursuing a legal career, claiming that there could be no future for an African American female attorney. She became the first African American female judge in 1939, when she was appointed to the Domestic Relations Court in New York. During her years on the bench, Judge Bolin brought revolutionary changes to New York, including the assignment of probation officers to individuals without regard to race or religion, and private childcare agencies’ acceptance of children regardless of ethnic or racial background if the agency was receiving public funding.

Shortly after her appointment to the bench, her husband died, leaving her a single parent of a two-year old son. She balanced motherhood and a full-time professional career for the next seven years before remarrying. Many parents balancing a career and parenthood can relate to Judge Bolin,



who once remarked on the subject: “I don’t think I short-changed anybody but myself. I did not get all the sleep I needed ... I felt my first obligation was to my child.”

Constance Baker Motley has led an incredible life of “firsts.” She was the first woman to argue before the United States Supreme Court. In 1964, she became the first African American female senator in New York State. In 1966, she was the first African American woman appointed to the federal bench. She was appointed to the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York, the largest federal trial court in the country. She was hired by Thurgood Marshall as an attorney for the Legal Defense Fund. There, Motley worked tirelessly opening the doors for blacks to attend higher education institutions of their choice.

Barbara Jordan was an accomplished lawyer, legislator, orator, and educator, who led a distinguished life of groundbreaking firsts. She became the first African American and the first African American woman elected to preside over a state legislature, when she became the President Pro Tempore of the Texas Senate in 1972. She was also the first African American woman (and the first woman) to deliver the keynote address at a major political party convention – the 1976 Democratic

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National Convention. She was a nationally recognized champion for the disadvantaged, an advocate for civil rights, and a defender of constitutional principles during the Nixon impeachment hearings, when she sat on the House Judiciary Committee. In memorial to her works, she is remembered as follows: "Barbara Jordan left timeless lessons of tenacity and perseverance for those who will follow in her footsteps for generations to come."

The Honorable Joyce London Alexander, the nation's first African American female Magistrate Judge, was sworn in on August 6, 1979, in the District of Massachusetts. Magistrate Alexander also became the nation's first African American and African American female Chief Magistrate Judge in 1996. She is adamant about community service, and has started a program that provides 5th grade students with educational and learning experiences in the federal courts. The Museum of African American History has designated Magistrate Alexander as a "living legend," and her leadership as a role model makes her particularly suited for such a title.

Amalya Lyle Kearse distinguished herself as the first woman and the first African American woman to be appointed to a United States Court of Appeals. She was appointed to the Second Circuit in 1979. Judge Kearse's towering intellect is recognized by her colleagues, who call her "our resident genius." She has also been considered on several occasions for an appointment on the United States Supreme Court. Before being appointed to the bench, she was a lecturer for the New York University School of Law and on the board of Big Sisters. Kearse was also the first female African American partner in a Wall Street law firm.

In California, the first African American woman to be appointed a United States District Court judge was Consuelo Marshall, in the Central District of California. Judge Marshall, who was appointed in 1980, was the first woman to have been hired as a deputy Los Angeles City Attorney. She continued her career of firsts by becoming the first woman and the first African American woman to serve as chief judge of a United States District Court. Judge Marshall was awarded California Women Lawyers' 14th annual distinguished jurist award in

2007, in recognition not only of her groundbreaking career, but also because she has been a tremendous mentor to many, many people. Judge Marshall, now on senior status, is consistently reaching a hand down behind her and helping other people.

Many of us in Sacramento are familiar with Judge Alice Lytle who, in 1982, was the first African American woman to be appointed to the Sacramento County bench. Upon the unification of the bench in 1998, she became the first African American female judge of any Superior Court in California. Her community involvement is also legendary, as is her role as a mentor. She established La Casita, which is believed to be the first courthouse waiting area for children in the nation.

More recently, Northern California's federal judiciary has opened its doors to African American women. Saundra Brown Armstrong was the first African American woman to be appointed to the United States District Court for the Northern District of California in 1991, where she currently serves in the Oakland Division. Armstrong became the first African American female prosecutor in the Alameda County District Attorney's Office in 1978. As evidence of the changing culture, Judge Armstrong credits her supportive parents, who instilled a positive, secure, and confident self-concept. Judge Armstrong acknowledges the importance of mental, physical, and spiritual balance in life. Work life balance is a continuing challenge for female attorneys and newly admitted attorneys.

As I review this abbreviated history, from 1872 to today, from Charlotte Ray to Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama, I am reminded of that Bob Dylan line: "[T]he times they are a -changin'." Additionally, I note a couple of common threads that run through each of these pioneering women's stories. The first is that they served as the voice of justice. The second is that they each gave back to their community through community service, and the third is that they also served as role models and mentors for the aspiring women who came after them. Each of these women used the power of their JD to move forward the progress of women and African Americans. I hope that each of you will consider this as a personal challenge to follow in their footsteps.

Women Lawyers of Sacramento and Wiley Manuel Bar Association are Proud to Co-Host a February Luncheon in Honor of Black History Month

**Continue to Learn How Others “Maximize the Power of the JD”
Featuring a Panel Presentation Highlighting the Careers of: Ms. Phyllis A. Marshall, Ms. Carolyn J. Veal-Hunter, and Ms. Angela Gilliard.**

DATE: February 28, 2008

The program is entitled: **“Lobbying with the Juris Doctorate.”**



Phyllis Marshall has more than 15 years of experience lobbying the California Legislature and advocating for her clients before Executive Branch agencies and other government offices and commissions. Ms. Marshall’s lobbying efforts involve a variety of sectors including: financial services, insurance, healthcare, local government, pharmaceutical manufacturing and sales, energy, and the very controversial Business and Professions Code §17200 reform, where she served as lead lobbyist on civil justice issues. Ms. Marshall creatively develops and implements legislative and regulatory tactics and strategies to benefit her individual clients, preparing her well for maximum representation of those clients in administrative enforcement, compliance, and regulatory proceedings. Ms. Marshall is currently Counsel at Manatt Phelps Phillips, receiving her JD from UC Hastings College of Law and her BS in Nursing from San Jose State University.



Angela Gilliard joined the Western Center on Law and Poverty in 2002 as their Legislative Advocate specializing in health care issues. Ms. Gilliard provides expert analysis to the national, state, and local media, both houses of the Legislature, as well as the Governor’s Office. Ms. Gilliard was formerly a Senior Policy Consultant to the California State Assembly, where she advised Members on the Health Committee and other Assembly leadership offices on various health care issues. Prior to joining the Legislature, Ms. Gilliard worked as a policy analyst for the Department of Health Services in the Medi-Cal Managed Care Division. In 1992, Ms. Gilliard developed and co-managed a multi-disciplinary and multi-ethnic mental health practice in Los Angeles, California. Ms. Gilliard received her JD from McGeorge School of Law and in 2006, Ms. Gilliard graduated from the Campaign School for Women at Yale program.



Carolyn Veal-Hunter is a Governmental Advocate with the lobbying firm of Sloat Higgins Jensen and Associates, representing clients before the California Public Utilities Commission, the Department of Insurance, and the Board of Equalization. Ms. Veal-Hunter brings over 20 years of legislative, legal, and management experience to this discussion, formerly serving as Chief Consultant to the Assembly Utilities and Commerce Committee, as well as presently serving as the key lobbyist for companies such as SBC, PG&E, and Verizon Wireless. Ms. Veal-Hunter has also served as the Regional Counsel/Manager for Cordoba Corporation, a minority-owned technical consulting firm, as well as Manager in the Government Consulting Services Practice of KPMG Peat Marwick. Supporting the community, Ms. Veal-Hunter has been General Counsel for the Black American Political Association and the National Organization of Black Elected Legislative Women. Ms. Veal-Hunter is currently serving as Acting Assistant Treasurer to the California State Conference of the NAACP. Ms. Veal-Hunter received her JD from UCLA.

WHERE: Firehouse Restaurant (Old Sacramento)

TIME: 11:45 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.

MENU: *Pecan-Wood-Smoked Pork* grilled tenderloin and braised carnitas, pomegranate barbecue demi-glace and creamed winter greens, *Petit King Salmon* fresh King salmon pan seared with sauce arlesienne and tomato confit, or *Vegetable Wellington* roasted butternut squash, beets, caramelized onions, braised fennel, napa cabbage, baked in light flaky puff pastry.

COST: **\$25.00** for pre-paid WLS members, past presidents of WLS, and judges; **\$30.00** for all others, except law students, whose cost is **\$15.00**. It may not be possible to get a first choice entree unless reserved and paid in advance. Please mail a check, payable to WLS, with menu choice to WLS, P.O. Box 936, Sacramento, CA 95812, Attn: Luncheon, for receipt by **February 20, 2008. Please indicate if you are a pre-paid WLS/WMBA member, past president, judge on your check.** WLS and WMBA are charged for cancellations; payments are non-refundable.

RSVPs or Questions? Contact Amal Abu-Rahma at (916) 322-9726 or aaburahma@dmhc.ca.gov or Angela Lai at (916) 442-8888 or alai@nossaman.com. WMBA members may contact the following for questions only, no RSVPs please: WMBA President Jean-Pierre Francillette at (916) 440-7817 or jean-pierre.francillette@dhcs.ca.gov. Seating at the door is subject to availability. Please bring any unused toiletries/women's personal items to the luncheon. These items are donated to Maryhouse, a non-profit organization helping homeless women and children.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CLE EVENT FOR CORPORATE COUNSEL

The ABA Section of Litigation Committee on Corporate Counsel will present its 27th annual CLE seminar in February, 2008. This year's seminar is especially designed for the in-house lawyer and her working relationship with outside counsel. Of particular interest to women are two programs on Saturday, February 16th that are co-sponsored by the ABA Commission on Women in the Profession:

- "Women of Color in the Legal Profession: Why It Means Success for Everyone" will address concrete steps that can be taken to ensure that women lawyers of color succeed.
- The Women's Networking Lunch offers an opportunity to interact with female colleagues and discuss issues impacting women.

For more information about the CLE seminar and to register, visit: <http://www.abanet.org/litigation/committees/corporate/clear.html>.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

ASSOCIATE NEEDED AT SACRAMENTO LAW FIRM

Civil Litigation Firm with emphasis on personal injury and insurance seeks bright, energetic associate, with 3-5 yrs exp. Excellent writing skills a must. Competitive salary and benefits. Fax resume & writing sample to The Costa Law Firm at (916) 920-2857.

THE ACLU'S CALIFORNIA LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SEEKS A FULL-TIME LEGISLATIVE ADVOCATE

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) Legislative Office lobbies on a broad range of civil liberties issues, including criminal justice, civil rights, privacy, reproductive rights and freedom of expression. Responsibilities include but are not limited to: preparing and delivering testimony on pending legislation; writing letters stating the ACLU's position on legislation; negotiating with legislators, staff and other advocates; and researching and drafting bills and amendments.

Law degree and legal experience preferred. A demonstrated ability in collaborating with media and coalitions, and bilingual ability are a plus. Please submit a resume and a cover letter to Francisco Lobaco, Legislative Director, ACLU Legislative Office, 1127 11th St. #534, Sacramento, Ca. 95814. For a full job description go to www.aclunc.org.

TEAM UP WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY TO WALK OR RUN FOR KIDS!



FEB. 9, 2008
FOURTH POWER FITNESS
(behind Country Club Plaza)

RACE HOTLINE
(916) 551-2164
WWW.LSNC.INFO

KEEPING KIDS AND FAMILIES ON TRACK
A FUN RUN BENEFITING LEGAL SERVICES OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

SATURDAY, FEB. 9, 2008

EVENT DETAILS

- 7-8:30 a.m. Race Day Registration, Packet Pick Up
- 8:40 a.m. ¼ Mile Kids' Fun Run, 0-5 years old
- 8:45 a.m. ½ Mile Kids' Fun Run, 6-9 years old
- 8:50 a.m. ½ Mile Kids' Fun Run, 10-12 years old
- 9 a.m. 4-mile timed runners
- 4-mile or 1.8 mile fitness run or walk
- 10:30 a.m. Award Ceremony

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

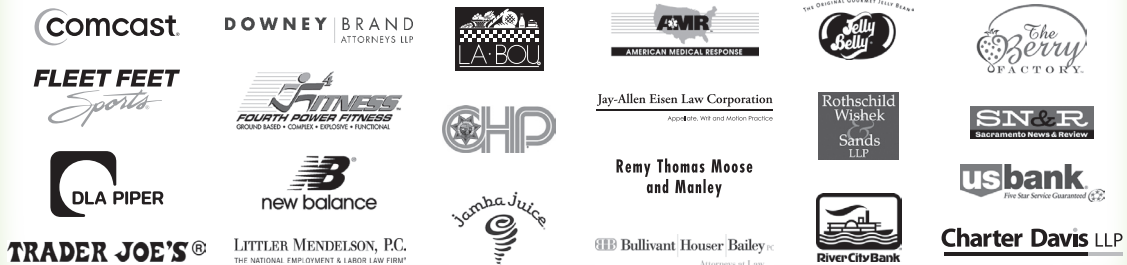
Legal Services of Northern California (LSNC) is your local legal aid, a nonprofit organization. We've been defeating poverty since 1956.

ENTRY FEES

- Mail-in (postmarked by Feb. 4).... \$25 (Kids \$16)
- Online (by Feb. 4)..... \$25 (Kids \$16)
- Online (by Feb. 5 - 6)\$30 (Kids \$20)
- Walk-in at Fleet Feet - Feb. 8\$30 (Kids \$20)
- Race Day\$30 (Kids \$20)

RACE HOTLINE

(916) 551-2164
WWW.LSNC.INFO





Women Lawyers of Sacramento 2008 Prepaid Luncheon Application

APPLICANT INFORMATION

- Prepay for 3 or More Luncheons

Please Indicate # of Luncheons: _____. Please indicate # of Attendees: _____.

- Prepay for Entire 2008 Luncheon Series - Buy 11 lunches, Get the 12th for Free

Please indicate # of Attendees: _____.***

***2008 lunches will be \$25.00 for all prepaid members of WLS, Judges, and Past Presidents; \$30.00 for all others; \$15.00 for students. Prepaid lunches are non-refundable, however, they are transferable. In addition, lunches that are prepaid for the year 2008 can only be used during that year and cannot be forwarded to the year 2009. We apologize in advance for any inconvenience this may cause.

Name/Sponsor*: _____

Firm/Office: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

*If you or your organization will be sponsoring attendees, specific names need not be given now, but must be provided at the time of your reservation to attend the program.

MEMBERSHIP STATUS

Indicate #

Indicate #

_____ Active Member of WLS
(Dues Prepaid or WLS
Membership
Application Attached)

_____ Student (Law School
or Otherwise)

_____ Honorary Member of
WLS (Past President
/Judge)

_____ Non-WLS Member

Please return completed application with check payable to: WLS, Attention: Luncheons, P.O. Box 936, Sacramento, CA 95812

Questions? Please contact a Programs Committee Co-Chair at www.womenlawyers-sacramento.org



Women Lawyers of Sacramento

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