



# WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN

STRIVING TO SECURE THE FULL AND EQUAL  
PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE LEGAL  
PROFESSION IN FURTHERANCE OF A JUST SOCIETY.



## 2015 ANNUAL REPORT

### WLAM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### Officers

Michele Rivas - President  
Kristen Pursley - President Elect  
Suzanne Sukkar - Vice President  
Julie Gafkay - Treasurer  
Donna MacKenzie - Secretary  
Marla Linderman - Past President

#### Directors at Large

Tricia Dennis  
Roquia Draper  
Hon. Kirsten Kelly  
Sarah Kuchon  
Hon. Denise Langford Morris  
Nicolette Zachary

#### Regional Representatives

Liesel Cervin, Western Region  
Alena Clark, Wayne Region  
Melissa Epstein, Washtenaw Region  
Samantha Orvis, Oakland Region  
Anca Pop, Great Lakes Bay Region  
Nicole Smithson, Macomb Region

*Made in Michigan*

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BUILDING OUR COMMUNITIES THROUGH  
INDUSTRY, CREATIVITY AND SERVICE



## Women Lawyers Association of Michigan

### President's Report

*Submitted by Michele A. Rivas, WLAM President 2014-2015*

#### WLAM ANNUAL REPORT 2014-2015

The 2014-2015 year was a very busy year for the Women Lawyers Association of Michigan (WLAM). This past year was the first year of a five-year plan developed by an advisory committee of WLAM past presidents. The WLAM 5-year plan is ambitious, but it is my firm belief that it will lead us into our 100<sup>th</sup> year anniversary as a larger, stronger, and more cohesive organization.



Michele A. Rivas

Some of the strategic goals met in Year 1, include:

- **Successful WLAM Programming:**

- Annual Meeting at the Bavarian Inn Lodge, Frankenmuth, Michigan, exceeded budgeted revenue expectations and featured the following breakout sessions:
  - Judges Panel Discussion: Past experiences, successes, failures and best memorable moments were shared by Honorable Amy Gierhart, Honorable Kirsten Frank Kelly, Honorable Marilyn Kelly (Retired), Honorable Denise Langford Morris and Honorable Angela Sherigan.
  - Preparing to Become a Judge (featuring Nora Wright, Jennifer Salvatore and Kate Sharkey)
  - Mentors v Sponsors: How Sponsors Accelerate Careers (Elizabeth Jolliffe)
  - Navigating the Path to Becoming a Legislator (Senator Rebekah Warren and Barb Farrah)
  - Speed networking
- Hosted showing of the film "Girl Rising" – a groundbreaking film seen by millions and part of a movement for girls' education that shows how educating girls can change the world – for the benefit of the WLAM Foundation and Enough Said.
- Hosted MsJD viewing event in Detroit, featuring Paulette Brown, the first African American woman to be elected as the American Bar Association President.
- Implemented a new WLAM webinar series.
- Collaborated with many organizations to host various events, including:
  - Our Diverse Bar
  - The Power of Us (with the National Association of Women Lawyers)
  - Equal Pay Day Rally at the Capital (Lansing, Michigan)
- Provided WLAM members with information regarding pro bono opportunities, referrals, judicial openings and information regarding free webinars.

- **Increased Advocacy:** This year WLAM advocated for equal protection under the equal protection clause, to various circuit courts and to the U.S. Supreme Court via amicus briefs.

- **Increased WLAM's Digital Presence:**

- Reworked our existing LinkedIn presence and established new State WLAM Social Media
- Updated the WLAM website to be user-friendly and implemented strategic meta tags to increase search visibility. The new WLAM website also now features:
  - A referral directory (for use by the public and for member to member referrals)
  - A WLAM members-only section (for resources and member-to-member communication)
  - Recognition of Past Presidents and WLAM Award Recipients
  - Integration of WLAM state and regional social media, as well as statewide communication
  - Improved state-wide calendar and established individualized regional calendars

- **Continued Support of the WLAM Foundation:**



## Women Lawyers Association of Michigan

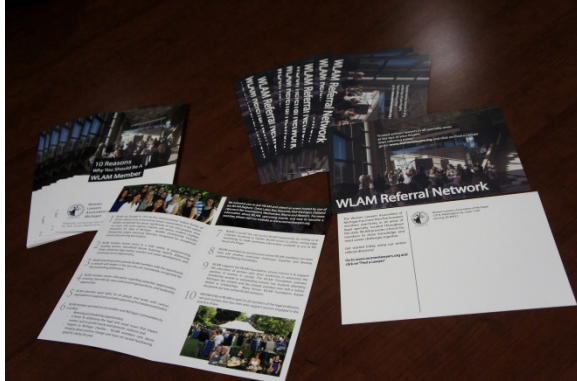
### President's Report

*Submitted by Michele A. Rivas, WLAM President 2014-2015*

- Continued work on the Memorandum of Understanding between WLAM and the WLAM Foundation and recognition of common goals
- Reestablished an annual fundraiser for the WLAM Foundation
- Donated to the WLAM Foundation through the annual WLAM Grill Off
- Supported the WLAM Foundation Award Reception and provided WLAM Foundation Awardees with one-year complimentary WLAM membership certificates
- Met goal of increasing WLAM State fundraising efforts by 10%
- Developing WLAM leadership training that will be provided in the Fall of 2015
- **Rebranded WLAM's logo**



- **Created new WLAM marketing materials (10 Reasons to Join WLAM; WLAM Referral Directory) and provided new table runners for WLAM State and Regional events**



In addition to the above accomplishments, the WLAM regions worked hard this year to provide quality programming to our members at the regional level, as you will see in the following pages of this Annual Report.

WLAM is blessed to have talented attorneys who are giving of their time and energy, and who are some of the most well-respected and distinguished leaders in the law within the State of Michigan. I'd like to extend a warm thank you to all of the WLAM leaders who served on the state and regional boards this year. Your contributions are greatly appreciated!

It has been my honor to serve as your President. Although Year 1 of the 5-Year Plan has ended, it is only the start of many good things to come!

Respectfully submitted,

*Michele*

Michele A. Rivas

2014-2015 President, Women Lawyers Association of Michigan



## Women Lawyers Association of Michigan

### Treasurer's Report

*Submitted by Julie Gafkay*

#### 2014 Statement of Operations

1. **Dues Revenue** – WLAM dues revenue declined in 2014 (\$40,780 in 2014; \$43,707 in 2013). The budgeted amount for 2014 was \$43,720 which was an increase in the budget from 2013 by \$2,000. Dues are anticipated to increase with membership with the implementation of the strategic plan by WLAM.

2. **Annual Meeting Revenue** – WLAM's 2014 Annual Meeting exceeded budget expectations and generated \$11,700 in revenue. The original 2014 budget projected revenue was \$9,725. The actual expense of the 2014 annual meeting was under budget by \$885.32 (\$4,200 was projected expense; \$3,314.68 actual expense). The net income from the annual meeting was \$8,385.32 which gave the organization a gain of \$2,860.32 over budget.

3. **Dues paid to Regions** – The 2014 budget estimated dues to regions in the amount of \$12,500. Actual dues paid to regions in 2014 totaled \$12,183.75 (\$316.25 under budget projections.)

4. **Communications and Marketing**. WLAM Board of Directors selected a no-cost broadcast e-mail service to communicate with members, eliminating the cost previously contained in line 750.30.

5. **Line Item 820 – Bank Fees** relates to credit card terminal rates. Fees in 2014 were budgeted at \$1,760. The actual fees were \$1,923.18. The \$163.18 over budget expenses can be attributed to the increase in credit card usage by members.

6. **Net Income after expenses for 2014** was \$3,153.25 which was \$3,115.25 over budget.

WLAM provided the following membership benefits in 2014-2015:

- A state-wide sponsored event with the showing of "Girl Rising" and fundraised for WLAM-Foundation which provides scholarships
- WLAM website was redesigned and launched
- Updated WLAM logo and marketing materials
- Webinar provided to members on Federal judiciary appointment process
- WLAM provided support of amicus briefs on policy issues
- WLAM launched the member of the month program
- WLAM participated in Equal Pay Day events on April 14th in Lansing
- WLAM provided ABA tips for young lawyers
- WLAM implemented the 5-year strategic plan announced at the 2014 annual meeting

#### Procedural Improvements

WLAM's administrator continues to provide monthly Statements of Operations that compare actual year-to-date finances with our budget as of that date. We can quickly ascertain if we are on target with expectations. WLAM provides timely requests for information from regional leaders, so that regional financial reports are accurate and dues payments to the regions are prompt.

#### Thank you!

Thanks to all the regional chapter treasurers for their hard work this year



Julie Gafkay



Women Lawyers Association of Michigan  
Treasurer's Report  
*Submitted by Julie Gafkay*

**Statement of Operations, FY 2014**

	<u>Jan - Dec 14</u>
<b>Income</b>	
640 Dues	
640.10 Sustaining Member	8,625.00
640.20 Attorney 5+ Years	24,455.00
640.30 Attorney 1-5 Years	6,250.00
640.40 Law Student	825.00
640.50 Attorney Admittee	100.00
640.60 Attorney Retiree	250.00
640.80 Associate Member	150.00
640.90 Paralegal	0.00
640.99 Attorneys In Transition	125.00
Total 640 Dues	40,780.00
660 Interest Income	0.00
680 Other Events/Activities	
680.10 Strategic Partnerships	0.00
680.20 Miss Rep. Film A2	0.00
680.40 WLAM Apparel/Merchandise	15.00
Total 680 Other Events/Activities	15.00
690 Annual Meeting Revenue	
690.10 Registration - Members	3,530.00
690.30 Sponsorships	7,700.00
690.50 Luncheon	300.00
690.60 Reception	170.00
Total 690 Annual Meeting Revenue	11,700.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<u>52,495.00</u>
<b>Expense</b>	
710 Board of Directors	
710.10 Board Meetings	0.00
710.20 Conference Calling	345.06
710.40 Directors/Officers Ins.	984.00
Total 710 Board of Directors	1,329.06
720 Committee Expenses	
720.20 Membership Committee	
720.20.3 Membership Mailings	0.00
720.20.5 Postage	0.00
Total 720.20 Membership Committee	0.00
Total 720 Committee Expenses	0.00



Women Lawyers Association of Michigan  
Treasurer's Report  
*Submitted by Julie Gafkay*

<b>730 Licenses and Fees</b>	20.00
<b>740 Regions</b>	
740.10 Region Dues	11,983.75
740.20 Special Project Funding	200.00
<b>Total 740 Regions</b>	12,183.75
<b>750 Communications/Marketing</b>	
750.30 Services (Const.Contact)	0.00
750.40 Print/Promotion Material	0.00
750.50 WLAM Logo Merchandise	0.00
<b>Total 750 Communications/Marketing</b>	0.00
<b>760 President Expenses</b>	513.91
<b>780 Other Events/Activities</b>	
780.20 MissRepresentation A2	0.00
780.50 State Event TBD	369.14
<b>Total 780 Other Events/Activities</b>	369.14
<b>790 Annual Meeting</b>	
790.01 Speakers	0.00
790.10 Facility	
790.11 Audio/Visual	124.55
790.12 Food & Beverage	1,975.03
790.13 Room Rental	132.09
790.14 Reception	1,083.01
<b>Total 790.10 Facility</b>	3,314.68
790.20 Awards	
790.20.1 President	29.15
790.20.2 JLK	261.81
790.20.3 Judge	124.01
790.20.4 Region Member	222.60
<b>Total 790.20 Awards</b>	637.57
790.30 Leadership Training	0.00
790.50 Meeting Materials/Signs	
790.50.01 Signs	119.64
790.50.02 Program	275.24
790.50.03 Materials	524.01
790.50 Meeting Materials/Signs - Other	4.95
<b>Total 790.50 Meeting Materials/Signs</b>	923.84
790.60 Mail Services, Postage	254.11
790.80 Give-Aways/Gifts	708.88



Women Lawyers Association of Michigan  
Treasurer's Report  
*Submitted by Julie Gafkay*

790.90 Promotion/Marketing	901.70
<b>Total 790 Annual Meeting</b>	<b>6,740.78</b>
<b>800 Professional Fees</b>	
800.10 Accounting Services	600.00
800.20 Administrative Services	24,000.00
800.30 Admin/Staff Travel	212.09
<b>Total 800 Professional Fees</b>	<b>24,812.09</b>
<b>810 Dues &amp; Subscriptions</b>	
810.10 NCWBA	175.00
<b>Total 810 Dues &amp; Subscriptions</b>	<b>175.00</b>
<b>820 Bank Fees</b>	<b>1,923.18</b>
<b>830 Web Resources</b>	
830.10 Website Hosting/Domain	214.40
830.40 Technical Support Svcs	0.00
<b>Total 830 Web Resources</b>	<b>214.40</b>
<b>840 Office Supplies</b>	
840.10 Copies	118.70
840.20 Stationery/Envelopes	26.05
840.30 Labels	6.35
<b>Total 840 Office Supplies</b>	<b>151.10</b>
<b>850 Postage</b>	<b>251.90</b>
<b>860 Telephone</b>	<b>545.74</b>
<b>870 Printing</b>	<b>111.70</b>
<b>890 Charitable Contributions</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>900 Prior Year Expenses (2011)</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>49,341.75</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>3,153.25</b>



## Women Lawyers Association of Michigan Gender Equity Committee

### 2015 Report

**Chair:** Julie Gafkay

**Members:** Michele Rivas, Christine Seppala, Nicole Smithson, Alena Clark, Maureen Ellen Curran, Amy Krieg, Melissa Epstein, and Lindsay Kelley-Bliven

This committee develops programs and services to: (1) assist members in dealing with gender bias; (2) raise awareness among the bench, bar, law schools, law enforcement, state government and/or general public of the continuing problem of gender bias; and (3) attempts to reduce the frequency and severity of the incidents and effects of gender bias on individual lawyers and members of society.

WLAM was a co-sponsor in 2015 with several other organizations of Equal Pay Day events in Lansing on April 14, 2015. Equal Pay Day originated in Michigan in 1996 as a public awareness event to illustrate the gap between men's and women's wages. It is held on April 14th to symbolize how far into 2015 women must work to earn what men earned in 2014.

WLAM participated in an Equal Pay Day Rally on April 14 in the Rotunda of the State Capitol Building. Members also attended a pay equity briefing beforehand.

In 2013-2014 there were eight measures to promote pay equity introduced in the Michigan Senate and House. There was never action taken on those bills. They were reintroduced in April of 2015. The bills include:

- HB 4516 (Lamonte), SB 297 (Young) - requires employers to supply certain wage information upon request
- HB 4517 (Slavens), SB 296 (Warren) - establishes a pay equity commission
- HB 4518 (Driskoll), SB 299 (Whitmer) - prohibits wage discrimination
- HB 4519 (Hovey-Wright), SB 298 (Warren) - provides penalties for wage discrimination



Women Lawyers Association of Michigan  
Annual Report of the WLAM Foundation  
April 2015

The Women Lawyers Association of Michigan Foundation enjoyed another very successful year of supporting women's education, raising over \$42,000 for scholarships. In 2015, the WLAM Foundation reached the level of \$530,000 given away in scholarships over the past nineteen years, to 220 awardees! The success of the Foundation is largely based on the exceptional talent of its Board of Directors, comprised in 2014-15 of Dawn Van Hoek (Chair), Paula M. Talarico (Treasurer), Sandra L. Sorini (Secretary), Lori D. Becker, Z. Kay Fitzpatrick, Ann Erickson Gault, Nancy Glen, Markeisha Miner, Deborah K. Nowak-Vanderhoef, Meghan Kennedy Riordan, and Maya Watson.

Fundraising in 2014-15 took the forms of event sponsorship (\$1,500), the Seventh Annual Culinary Challenge (\$7,960), the "Dean's List" giving campaign (approx. \$30,040), dues check-off from WLAM members (\$769) and the Kimberly M. Cahill Fund (\$3,600). Major continuing support was shown by corporations and law firms, particularly General Motors, the Albert & Doris Pitt Foundation, the Dickinson Wright Women's Network, Bodman PLC, Carole Chiamp, Judge Pamela Harwood, Schoenherr Cahill & Warnez PC, Talarico & Associates PC, Sue Ellen Eisenberg, and the Culinary Challenge Committee. As in prior years, a significant number of individuals also contributed to the campaign, joining the corporations, law firms and special funds in their generous support. The 2015 Dean's List of donors follows:

**Summa Cum Laude (\$2,500 and above)**

General Motors  
Albert & Doris Pitt Foundation  
Bench-Bar Culinary Challenge Committee  
Dickinson Wright Women's Network

**Magna Cum Laude (\$1,000 to \$2,500)**

Bodman, PLC  
Carole Chiamp  
Sue Ellen Eisenberg  
Pamela Harwood  
Honigman Miller Schwartz & Cohn LLP  
Talarico & Associates, P.C.  
Schoenherr, Cahill & Warnez, PC♥

**Cum Laude (\$750 to \$999)**

Clark Hill PLC  
Marianne & Judge Lawrence Talon



Women Lawyers Association of Michigan  
Annual Report of the WLAM Foundation  
April 2015

**Good Citizenship (\$150 to \$749)**

Mary Ann Abramson-Kirsbaum  
Mary Barden  
Hon. Marianne Battani♥  
Lori D. Becker  
Kenneth M. Bernard, CFA  
Bernard Wealth Management Corp.  
Jackie Cook  
Thomas W. Cranmer♥  
Howard B. & Nina Dodge Abrams Philanthropic Fund  
Theresa Doss  
Brian Einhorn  
Ann Erickson Gault  
Stephanie Fakih  
Julie Fershtman♥  
Z. Kay Fitzpatrick♥  
LeeAnn Ford  
Nancy Glen & Ralph McDowell♥  
Tara Hanley Bratton♥  
Elizabeth Hines  
Michelle Johnson Tidjani  
Hon. Marilyn Kelly♥  
Kerr, Russell & Weber PLC  
Kathryn Ladewski♥  
Ann Mattson  
Barbara McQuade  
Markeisha Miner  
Sharon Noll Smith  
Deborah Nowak-Vanderhoef  
Trish Oleksa Haas  
Kristen Pursley  
Margaret Raben  
Hon. Michael & Meghan Riordan  
Peter & Martha Ruggirello♥  
Sandra Sorini Elser  
Maureen Thomas♥  
Dawn Van Hoek  
Maya Watson  
Lorraine Weber  
Women Lawyers Association of Michigan  
Hon. Robert L. Ziolkowski

♥ Donations made to the Kimberly M. Cahill Scholarship Fund



## Women Lawyers Association of Michigan Annual Report of the WLAM Foundation April 2015

Virtually all of the money raised by the WLAM Foundation goes directly into law student scholarships or an educational endowment fund; less than ten percent of the money raised goes to administration, a very low percentage in the fund-raising world. The Foundation's web site, [www.wlamfoundation.org](http://www.wlamfoundation.org), contains news, archives, photographs, profiles of student-awardees, and much more. Event support was handled with considerable aplomb by Barbara Campos, with generous in-kind support from Talarico & Associates PC.

Awards made to Outstanding Women Law Students this year totaled \$30,000, awarded to ten students attending Michigan's five accredited law schools. The 2015 Outstanding Women Law Students are:

### **General Motors Scholars:**

**Charlotte Johnson**, Wayne State University Law School  
**Miriam Schachter**, University of Michigan Law School  
**Heather Spielmaker**, Thomas M. Cooley Law School  
**Paula R. Willuweit**, Michigan State University College of Law

### **Dickinson Wright Women's Network Scholar:**

**Leah Hurvitz**, Michigan State University College of Law

### **Dawn Van Hoek Scholar:**

**Ashley Zacharski**, Wayne State University Law School

### **WLAM Foundation Scholars:**

**Mikyia Aaron**, University of Detroit Mercy School of Law  
**Sabrina Rewald**, University of Detroit Mercy School of Law  
**Karen Wentz**, Thomas M. Cooley Law School

### **Kimberly M. Cahill Scholar:**

**Samantha Hall**, University of Michigan Law School

Students were selected on the basis of their demonstrated leadership and on their commitment to women's and diversity issues. Full profiles of the students appear on the Foundation's web site, [www.wlamfoundation.org](http://www.wlamfoundation.org). The 2015 Outstanding Women Law Students were introduced at the Foundation's Annual Reception, held on March 25,

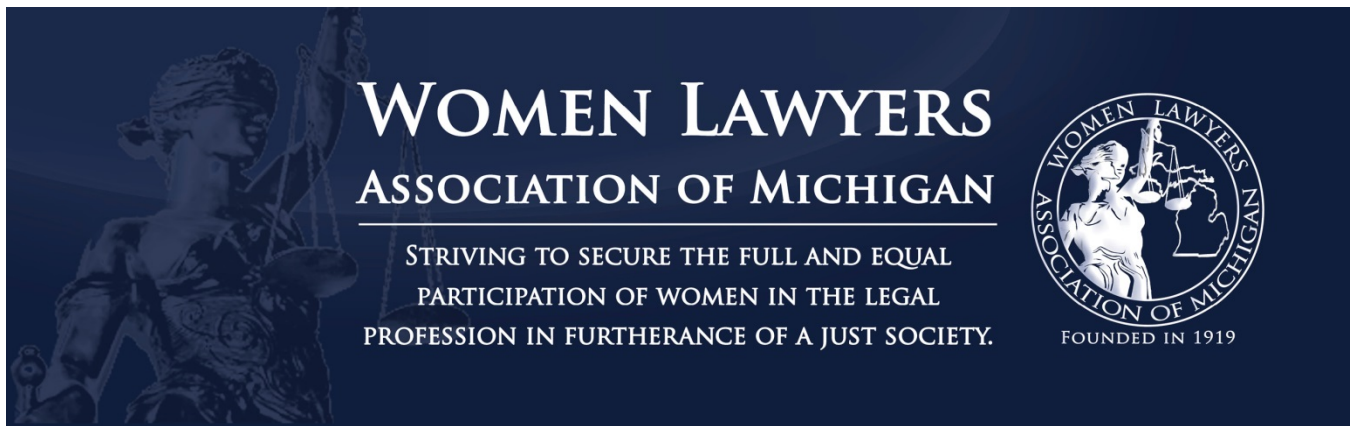


Women Lawyers Association of Michigan  
Annual Report of the WLAM Foundation  
April 2015

2015, at Southfield's Great Lakes Culinary Center. The event was well-attended by students and their families, former awardees, dignitaries, members of the Dean's List, and friends of the Foundation. Attendees were inspired by remarks from Michigan's three women law school deans, Dean Jocelyn Benson (Wayne State University Law School), Dean Phyllis Crocker (University of Detroit Mercy School of Law), and Dean Joan Howarth (Michigan State University College of Law). Generous sponsors of the reception were Kenneth M. Bernard, CFA, Bernard Wealth Management Corp., Nancy Glen & Ralph McDowell, and Talarico & Associates, PC. The WLAM Foundation would like to especially thank Dr. David Bauer and WLAMF Trustee, Z. Kay Fitzpatrick, for providing us with live entertainment at the reception. Finally, thanks to Michele Rivas, WLAM President, for presenting student/awardees with a one-year membership in WLAM.

Many thanks to all for the support shown during the year!

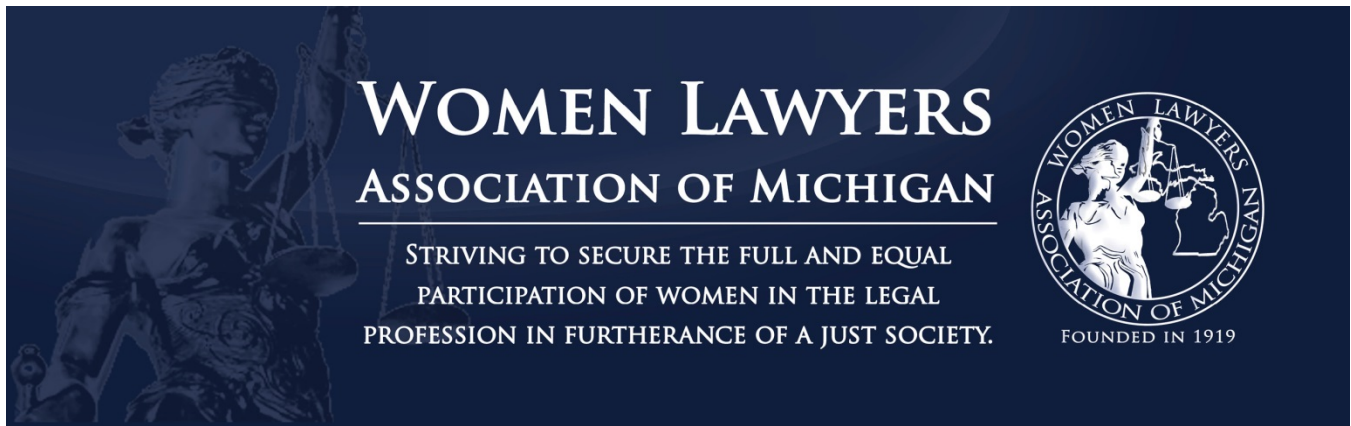
Respectfully submitted,  
Dawn Van Hoek,  
Chair, WLAM Foundation  
[dvanhoek@sado.org](mailto:dvanhoek@sado.org)



## Great Lakes Bay Region

- 1/23/2014 – Elected Donna Mallonee as our State Representative- she resigned at the end of summer/fall 2014
- 2/6/2014 – Meeting and networking at the Whichcraft Taproom, Midland, MI- great attendance
- 5/27/2014 – Planned luncheon with Sen. Debbie Stabenow at Bay valley Resort, Bay City, MI - canceled due to insufficient RSVPs
- 6/25/2014 – Summer kickoff – Old City Hall, Bay City, MI- great attendance
- 8/7/2014 – Kaitlyn Cramer resigned as Treasurer and VP due to moving to Detroit, Julie Gafky is filling out those positions at this time
- 10/8/2014 – Fall Happy Hour at Whine, Midland, MI –canceled due to insufficient RSVPs
- 12/16/2014 – Holiday Event at Prost, Frankenmuth, MI with donations to Emmaus House- great attendance





## Macomb Region

### 2014/2015 Annual Report

Since the last annual meeting, Macomb's membership has increased by over 15%. Additionally, Macomb, in response to member requests, offered more community service opportunities with its social activities. And as in 2013, Macomb welcomed and provided refreshments for the new lawyers and their families at the May and November 2014 swearing in ceremonies at the Macomb County Circuit Court.

#### *Book Club*

On July 24, 2014, members met at Brio Tuscan Grille at Partridge Creek to discuss the book *I Shouldn't Be Telling You This* by Kate White, former editor in chief of *Cosmopolitan* magazine. Attendees met after work and chatted over appetizers about how some of the author's comments and experiences related to their careers.

#### *Membership Mixer and Planning Meeting*

On September 16<sup>th</sup> Macomb had a membership drive/social at Ernie's Mediterranean. Macomb invited members and potential members to network, share some useful Top 10 tips, sign up for committees, and discuss activities for its 2014/2015 year. Sponsors' "goodie bags" were also given to attendees.

Because Macomb was going to be volunteering at Gleaners Community Food Bank, attendees were encouraged to bring a canned food item. Attendees also heard from Gleaner's volunteer, Robb Albrecht. The event was very successful as 95 pounds of food and \$95 were collected for Gleaners.

Just four days later, volunteers from Macomb processed 13,500 pounds food at the Gleaners location in Warren.

#### *Trunk or Treating*

On October 25, Macomb members gathered for some Halloween fun handing out candy to trick-or-treaters as part of the Mt. Clemens Optimists' "Trunk or Treating" in Mt. Clemens.

## Macomb Region, *cont.*

### *Criminal Law CLE on Macomb County's District Court Sobriety and Drug Courts*

On December 8<sup>th</sup> Macomb cohosted a CLE with the Criminal Law Section of the Macomb County Bar Association on the drug courts for the 37<sup>th</sup>, 39<sup>th</sup>, and 41B District Courts. The CLE was well received and well attended. Macomb has since been approached by attorneys working with local mental health and veterans' treatment courts to host a follow up CLE.

### *Clothing Drive and Resume Writing and Interviewing Skills Workshops for Teens in Foster Care*

Starting in January, Macomb began assisting teens on the Macomb Spirit Board (a group for teens and young adults involved in the foster care system) to become more employable. Macomb conducted a professional clothing drive so that each member of the Spirit Board could get clothing appropriate for a job interview. The clothing drive had such a great response that dates had to be extended to accommodate all of the donations. In February and March WLAM members partnered with volunteers both in and out of the legal field to conduct workshops on resume writing and interviewing. Each teen was able to receive one-on-one assistance in each of these areas. In addition, the volunteers reported that they enjoyed getting to know one another better and working as a team outside of their typical roles in the office or the courtroom.

### *Winter Luncheon*

In partnership with the YLS Section of the State Bar, Macomb held its annual luncheon on February 25<sup>th</sup> at Bath City Bistro in Mt. Clemens. Our featured speaker was Julie Gatti, WLAM member and Immediate Past President of the Macomb County Bar Association. Ms. Gatti shared personal stories and led a group discussion on professional image, leadership, and maintaining life balance.

### *Cocktails for a Cause Spring Mixer*

On April 16<sup>th</sup> Macomb will be having a cocktail social at Buca di Beppo in Utica to raise funds and awareness for the Macomb Charitable Foundation. This event will feature delicious food, a photo booth, games, conversation starters, and opportunities for networking.

*Director Julie Hlywa and Vice President Laura Marji preparing to welcome new lawyers at the May Admissions Ceremony*



*Macomb Board Members with Robb Albrecht of Gleaners at Ernie's Mediterranean*

## Macomb Region, *cont.*



*Part of our group of volunteers at Gleaners*

*Part of our group of Volunteers working at Gleaners*



*Attendees & Robb Albrecht at the Membership Mixer Macomb "Trunk" at the Mt. Clemens Trunk or Treat*



*Macomb Secretary Tanya Grillo as Mary Poppins*



*Macomb Member Angela Medley before Macomb County Circuit Court Judge Peter Maceroni as a new admittee on Nov. 19*



*President Maryanne Deneweth, VP Laura Marji, and volunteer Jeanne Peroglio donations from the clothing drive before the Resume Workshop on Feb. 24*



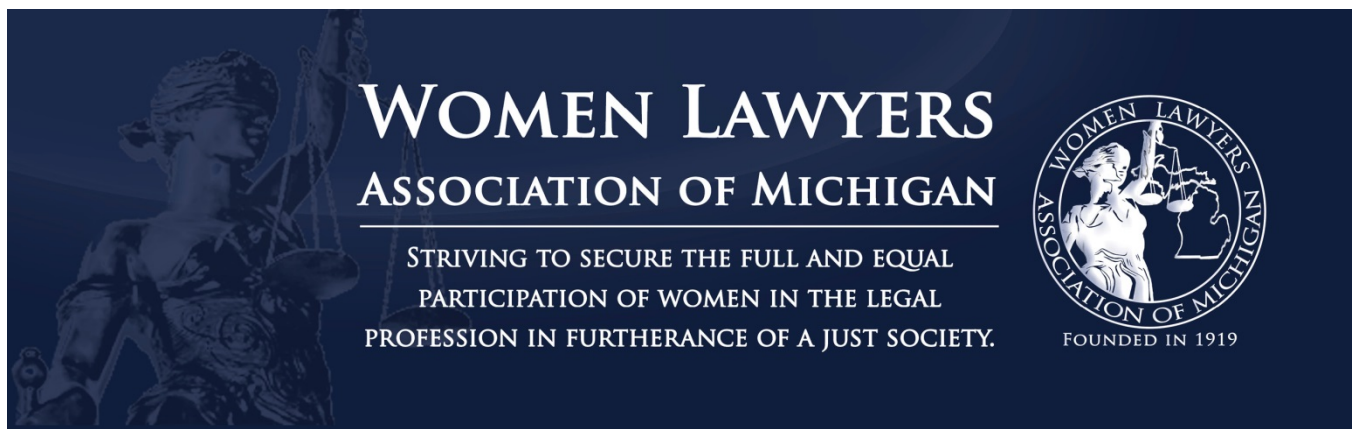
*Speaker/Member Julie Gatti with Attendees at the Winter Luncheon*

*Volunteers, DHS employees, and an enthusiastic participant/photobomber at the Interview Workshop on March 24*



Respectfully submitted,  
Maryanne J. Deneweth, President

Nicole M. Smithson, Regional Representative



## Mid-Michigan Region

### Annual Report

The Mid-Michigan Region is proud to announce seven new members including: Ms. Phoenix Hummel, Ms. Nancy Wonch, Ms. Sarah Williams, Ms. Roberta Sacharski, Ms. Lavon Ammori, Ms. Jessica Waite, and Mrs. Jacquelyn Johnson.

The Region hosted a Sponsors v Mentors: How Sponsors Can Accelerate Careers in February 2014. Ms. Elizabeth Jolliffe presented at this event. Members learned the value of having or becoming a sponsor to other women in our legal profession.

The Mid-Michigan's Annual Meeting was held on May 29, 2014. The Executive Director of the State Bar of Michigan, Ms. Janet Welch, who is also a WLAM Mid-Michigan member, was the keynote speaker. She gave a very detailed presentation on the legislation proposed to make State Bar of Michigan dues voluntary rather than mandatory.



At the conclusion of the Annual Meeting, the new officers for the 2014-2015 year were announced.

President: **Torree Breen**, Willingham & Cote', PC  
 Vice President: **Lori Herr**, Heisler Law Office  
 Treasurer: **Tara Nichol**, Nichol & Doering, PLLC  
 Secretary: **Kandra Robbins**, Michigan Administrative Hearing System

The Mid-Michigan Region also held their 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Stell Reception on November 18, 2014. The organization recognized the Honorable Janice K. Cunningham for her commitment to helping women succeed, her integrity in the legal profession, and her accomplishment of becoming the first Circuit Court Judge in Eaton County. Judge Cunningham had an esteemed career as a prominent women lawyer for twenty-five years before becoming a Judge.



*Middle: Honorable Janice K. Cunningham*

The Mid-Michigan Region also presented a law student with a \$1,000.00 scholarship in honor of Ms. Carolyn Stell, the first female Judge in Ingham County. That scholarship went to Ms. Jennifer Gallardo. Ms. Gallardo is attending Western Michigan University Thomas M. Cooley Law School where she has been on the Dean's List and Honor Roll every term.

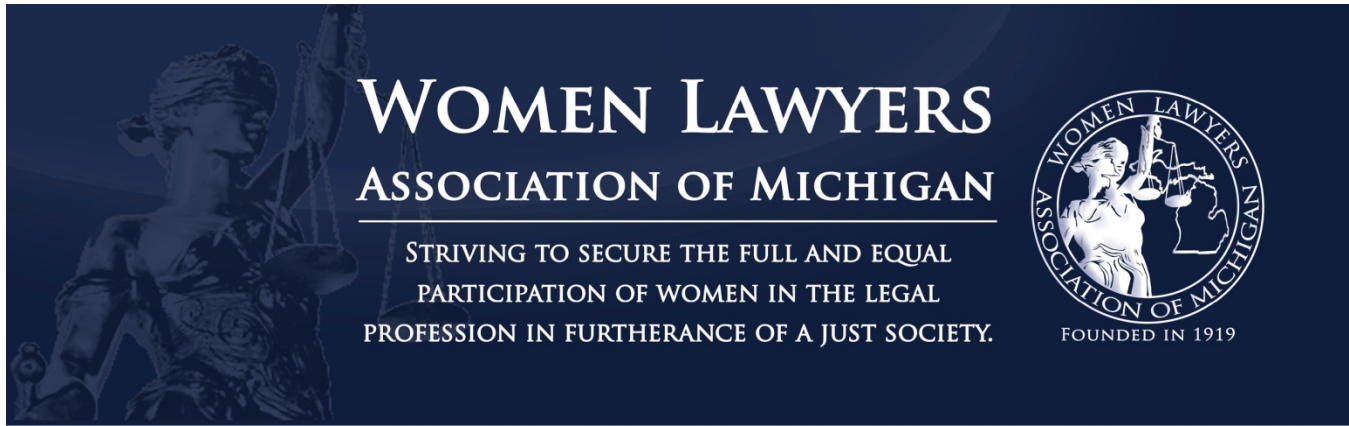


## Mid-Michigan Region, *cont.*

Last, but not least, the Mid-Michigan Region decided that December was the month for giving. The Region collected donations for the Oasis Family Center throughout the entire month of December. The Oasis Family Center is an organization providing a safe and respectful environment for safe exchanges and supervised parenting time for children and their parents; their services are available for families with a history of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, child abuse, and stalking. The center serves the Tri-County area. The WLAM received monetary donations as well as needed items to support this organization. Donations were collected at the annual Holiday Party held on December 3, 2014.

We would like to thank everyone who attended our mixers and events last year; we appreciate your support! We look forward to another great year!





## Oakland Region

### WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION OAKLAND COUNTY REGION OF WLAM Annual Report 2014-2015

**Summer Planning Meeting** – On June 28, 2014, Ryan Kelly hosted a great summer planning meeting to discuss plans for our 2014---2015 year. We discussed our agenda for the coming year as well as special events we have planned. Many of our popular events will continue such as our fall networking event/membership drive, Patriot Week event, holiday party and annual dinner. We also signed up for committees and special committees for the year and were pleased to welcome some new faces. We are looking forward to an active and fun year! Our first board meeting was planned for September 3, 2014 at 5:30 p.m.

**Patriot Week Event** – In honor of Patriot Week, WBA Members Joined Bingham Farms Elementary students on September 15, 2014 for a reading of "I Could Do That!: Esther Morris Gets Women the Vote!" The reading was followed by a discussion of the importance of the women's suffrage movement/Q&A. WBA donated the book to the school following the reading and discussion.

**Pro Bono Event** – WBA sent members to volunteer at legal aid mini clinics on three different dates (October 7, 14, and 20), in honor of Pro Bono Month.

**Membership Drive Event** – We hosted "Autumn After Hours" at Dick O'Dow's Irish Public House in Birmingham on October 16, 2014. This is our annual membership drive event. Lawyers, law students and judges joined us to make this event a great success. This event was a free, casual gathering for legal professionals to visit with old colleagues and meet some new ones. WBA membership information was provided and board members were available to chat about the wonderful activities in which we participate. Attendees enjoyed hors d'oeuvres and a drink on us!

## Oakland Region, *cont.*



**Sip & Stretch** – This was a new event hosted by the WBA this year. Members were invited to wind down at a yoga and socializing event at Shanti Yoga in Ferndale on November 1, 2014. A one-hour yin yoga class was followed by a brief guided meditation and socializing over wine and snacks.



**Holiday Party** – Our Annual Holiday Party took place on December 11, 2014 at Great Lakes Culinary Center for the second year in a row. Attendees enjoyed a cooking demonstration by chefs on staff, and enjoyed appetizers and drinks while shopping at the silent auction and mingling with colleagues. Proceeds from the silent auction benefited Humble Design, a local non---profit organization that furnishes homes with donated goods for families coming out of homeless and abuse shelters. For more information about Humble Design, please visit [humbledesign.org](http://humbledesign.org).

## Oakland Region, *cont.*



**Painting with a Twist** – We hosted a private party at Painting with a Twist in Ferndale on February 15, 2015. The event sold out! Members attended a unique and fun night out! The event consisted of a laid--- back painting experience in which participants were taught step---by---step how to paint, while enjoying wine and snacks. The event was featured in the Legal News: <http://www.legalnews.com/oakland/1401784/>



## Oakland Region, *cont.*



**Fireside Chat** – WBA hosted a brand new event recently! Attendees enjoyed a unique and intimate networking event at The Townsend Hotel in Birmingham on February 19, 2015. The event was tremendously well attended! Attendees gathered to share stories and their experience in the legal profession. The event was featured in the Legal News: <http://www.legalnews.com/detroit/1402083/>



**Board Building Meeting** – WBA held its annual board-building meeting on March 4, 2015. This is a meeting designed for attendees to learn all about the WBA, its events, our mission, in addition to the responsibilities and benefits of serving on the WBA executive board. We welcomed many new faces and enjoyed great conversation over dinner and drinks at Local Kitchen in Ferndale.

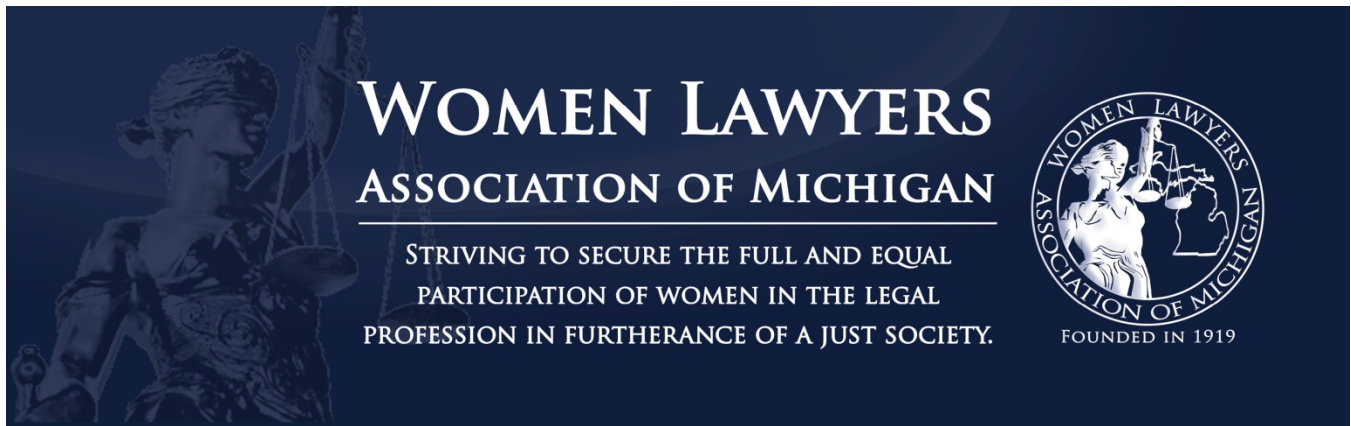
**Annual Dinner** – WBA is looking forward to our Annual Dinner and Awards Ceremony on May 14, 2015, at the Birmingham Athletic Club. We will honor a lawyer with the Evelyn Forrest Distinguished Advocate Award, which celebrates the accomplishments of a woman who is an inspiration to other female lawyers and approaches her practice with civility and professionalism. Also awarded at the Annual Dinner is the Judge Recognition Award, which goes to a judge who demonstrates commitment to community, judicial efficiency and integrity. We will also swear in our 2015-2016 board!

## Oakland Region, *cont.*

### **Executive Board 2014/2015:**

President, Ryan Kelly  
Immediate Past President, Melissa Graves  
President – Elect, Channelle Kizy---White  
Vice President, Kristen Pursley  
Treasurer, Erin Morgan Klug  
Recording Secretary, Andrea Symbal  
Communications Secretary, Melissa Atherton  
WLAM Representative, Samantha Orvis





## Washtenaw Region

### Women Lawyers Association of Michigan, State Meeting

#### **Washtenaw Region Report – 2015**

The Washtenaw County Board has had another fantastic year. We started the year with the swearing in of our new board at our annual meeting at Cottage Inn in downtown Ann Arbor. The new board members were: President, Jennifer Lawrence; Vice President, Anna Frushour; Treasurer, Kym London; Secretary, Theresa Rose; Regional Representative, Rita White; Communications Chair, Lori Burke; and Membership Chair, Tricia Reiser.

Kickball Game: In June, we continued our annual tradition of holding a kickball game and picnic at Buhr Park. Kids and adults played together; we grilled hot dogs, had snacks, enjoyed great conversation and a little exercise with colleagues, friends and their families.

Annual Summer Party: In July, at member Heidi Salter-Ferris' home on Ford Lake in Ypsilanti, we held our annual summer party. Members brought a dish to pass and enjoyed the beautiful views.

Summer Happy Hour: We held a casual happy hour at a local outdoor beer garden in Ann Arbor in August. It was a rainy day but it was well-attended.

Annual WLAM Tailgate: In September, member Elizabeth Jolliffe hosted a tailgate party for the University of Michigan football game. The weather was beautiful, the food was great, and many members walked to the football game after the afternoon tailgate.

Bias Awareness Lunch: In October, as part of Bias awareness week, the Washtenaw Region hosted a luncheon on Employment issues and criminal convictions. We had a wonderful panel of experts, including Rep. Fred Durhal who sponsored a bill for "ban the box legislation, Angie Walker from Nacht Law and Ashley Yoshizaki from Catholic Social Services prisoner re-entry program.

Stress Relief Event: On November 1, we hosted a "Yoga for Everyone" event. Our member, Sally Rutzky led the event. She gave wonderful tips and easy stress relief moves for the office or at home.

## Washtenaw Region, *cont.*

Annual Holiday Party: At the home of member and Judge Darlene A. O'Brien, we celebrated the holidays together. The party included the presentation of the Mary Foster Award which is given annually to a local member in recognition of her leadership, talent and significant contribution to women attorneys and women in general. This year the award was given to Deborah Labelle, an active civil rights attorney.

Joint Reception with the Washtenaw County Bar Association: On January 22, 2015, the Washtenaw Region jointly held a reception, as we do on an annual basis, with the Washtenaw County Bar Association. This year, the event was held at Weber's Inn, and was a networking event to "Meet and Greet the Judges" for members to mingle with newly elected and current Judges in the County.

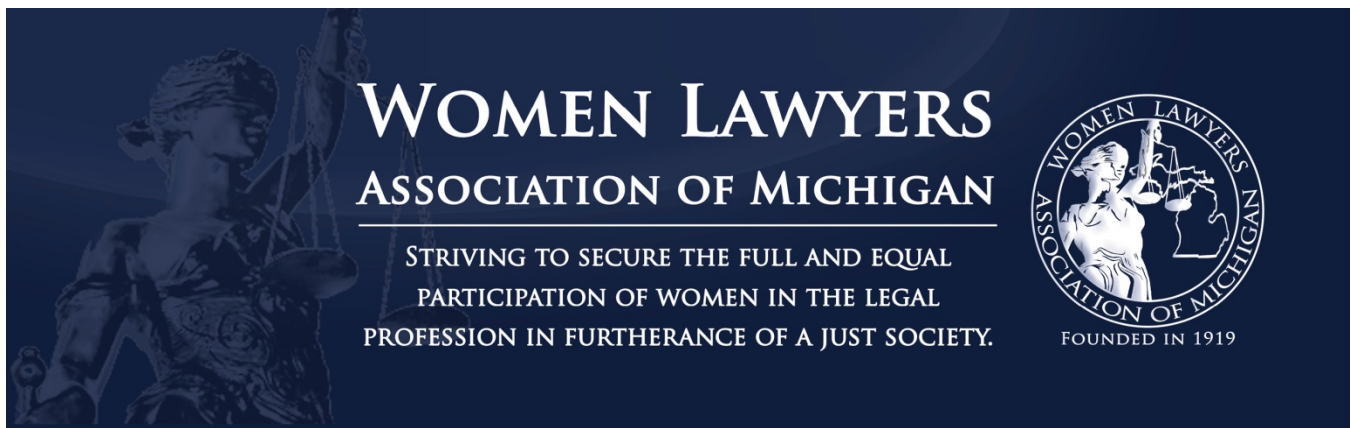
Moms-in-law Discussion: On February 20, 2015 former regional president Angela Walker facilitated a mom's in law luncheon downtown Ann Arbor. The event was attended by a group of moms who shared their experiences with balancing children with active careers.

Skills Event-Self Defense Seminar: On February 25, 2015 board member Tricia Reiser and attorney Len Niehoff led a self-defense seminar at a local Karate studio. Tricia is a black belt in Tae Kwon Do and worked with members to focus on basic self-defense movements. This was a wonderful empowering event to those who attended.

Social Skills Event: On March 25th the Washtenaw Region and the Washtenaw County Bar Association in conjunction with the New Lawyers Section will host social skills event at Vinology downtown Ann Arbor, where we will hosting a wine tasting and food pairing event. Members will meet and hear a presentation from John Janna owner of Vinology and socialize with friends.

Annual Luncheon: On May 20th, the Washtenaw Region will host our annual end of the year luncheon. The incoming board will be sworn in at this event.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jennifer Lawrence, President



## Wayne Region

### **May 2014 to April 2015 Annual Report**

#### Community Service Events:

On June 7, 2014, the Region once again participated in the Susan G. Komen Race for a Cure. Seventeen members participated and a great time was had by all.

On June 12, 2014, members from the Region attended the 7th Annual Bench Bar Culinary Challenge. The annual outdoor event is a cook-off between teams of judges and lawyers and is always a great time. In all, more than \$20,000 was raised for three very worthy causes - Alternatives for Girls, Crossroads for Youth, and the WLAM Foundation Scholarship Fund. We look forward to attending the event again this year, which will take place in Huntington Woods.



Enjoying the Bench Bar Culinary Challenge

In the spirit of the season, the Region decided to host a volunteer event in lieu of its annual holiday party. On December 2, 2014, approximately twenty members prepared dinner for and visited with the families staying at Ronald McDonald House of Detroit. The evening was a huge success and is likely to become a Region staple.

## Wayne Region, *cont.*

On April 11, 2015, the Region is once again partnering with the Barristers Section of the Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association for a joint service event at Gleaners Community Food Bank.



Photo from last year's Gleaners' event – we are looking forward to another great day!

### Professional Development:

In June, the Region sent two leaders to the State Bar of Michigan Annual Bar Leadership Forum on Mackinac Island. During the two-day event, our representatives learned about the challenges and opportunities facing bar associations today, networked and swapped best-practices with other bar association leaders, and brain-stormed ideas for taking the Region from good to great.



Members enjoying the Bar Leadership Forum

In July, the Region held its Annual Summer Planning Meeting at the home of Court of Appeals Judge Kirsten Frank Kelly. The meeting was open to all members. During the meeting, members planned the agenda for the 2014-2015 year, focusing on the Region's goals of professional development, membership engagement, and community service. Everyone left eager to kick off the year.

## Wayne Region, *cont.*



Annual Summer Planning Meeting

In April 2015, the Region's President, Ellen Hoeppner, will be honored with the Regional Leadership award at the WLAM Annual Meeting. Ellen has been a wonderful asset to our leadership and we appreciate her service. Congratulations Ellen!

### Social Events:

In August, the Region hosted its Annual Wine and Garden Party at the home of Wayne County Circuit Court Judge Martha Snow. Approximately 100 members enjoyed a beautiful evening of good food, wine and company. A special thank you to Judge Snow for being an excellent host.



Having a great time at the Wine and Garden Party

## Wayne Region, *cont.*

In October, the Region held its annual Member Mixer at Third Street Bar, with appetizers provided by Dangerously Delicious Pies. The evening offered members an opportunity to network with members of the judiciary and each other in a fun, informal setting.

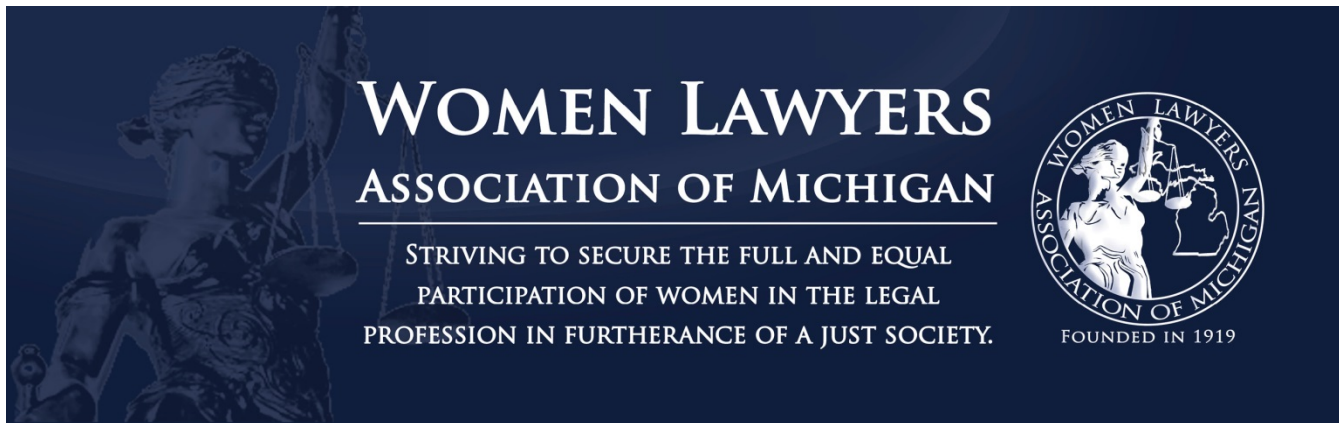
The Region continues to host quarterly book club discussions where members can “Read, Eat and Chat” together. In November, members gathered at Abbott Nicholson, P.C. to discuss *Even After All This Time: A Story of Love, Revolution, and Leaving Iran* by Afschineh Latifi. Next up on the reading list is *Bossypants* by Tina Fey.

In February, the Region held its annual Winter Wine Down at Courthouse Grill in Plymouth. Forty members attended and enjoyed an evening of excellent food, wine and networking. During the event, we also honored Wayne County Circuit Court Judges Martha Snow and Karen Braxton with Women Lawyers Association of Michigan banners to hang in the courtroom. We are glad to have Judges Snow and Braxton as members and contributors to our Region.



Winter Wine Down Celebration

The Region is currently busy planning for its Annual Meeting to take place in May, 2015. At that time, the 2015-2016 Board of Directors will be installed.



Western

## Western Region

### 2015 ANNUAL REPORT

Submitted by Kelly Brushaber  
March 27, 2015

#### *President*

Kelly Brushaber

#### *Vice President*

Amanda Narvaes

#### *Treasurer*

Jeannine Bolhouse

#### *Secretary*

Nicole Paterson

#### *Regional Representative*

Liesel Cervin

#### *Immediate Past President*

Kimberly Large

#### *Board Members at Large*

Wafa Adib-Lobo

Lindsey Bosch

Lindsay Canan

Christina McDonald

Rebecca Smith

Amy Thomas-Mellema

Natalie Warrick

Claire Whitman

### **I. 2014 Membership Events**

A. In September, Western Region members enjoyed a social luncheon at the University Club in Grand Rapids. With 17 members and guests in attendance, new Board members were announced, committee plans were described and upcoming programming for the year was discussed.

B. In October, Western Region members enjoyed a luncheon at the University Club in Grand Rapids, featuring speaker, Elizabeth Joliffe, who taught us about the benefits of expanding your marketing and establishing niche practice areas. We had 21 attendees.

C. In November, Western Region hosted an evening of wine tasting at Bar Divani in Grand Rapids. Despite snowy weather, 17 members and guests attended and enjoyed Malbecs from Argentina and France and dined on delicious appetizers, while learning of the history of this style of grape and origination of the wine.

### **II. 2014 Holiday Reception**

A. In December, we hosted our annual holiday reception and supported a local charity, Dispute Resolution Center of West Michigan. The event, held at the YWCA facility in Grand Rapids, offered hors d'oeuvres, desserts and wine to 36 local judges, lawyers and law students. Attendees donated \$335 to the charity in support of its mediation and training services which help people resolve conflicts privately or through the courts, teach effective communication, and aim for peaceful resolutions.

## Western Region, *cont.*

### III. 2015 Membership Events

A. In January, Western Region hosted a luncheon at El Barrio Restaurant in Grand Rapids. Two WLAM members, Dale Iverson and Susan Wilson Keener, facilitated an interesting presentation and interactive exercise on negotiation skills for our 20 attendees.

B. In February, Western Region hosted a luncheon at the University Club in Grand Rapids. Led by moderator Kim Large, a panel of three WLAM attorneys, Liz Balck, Anna Waller and Meghan Moore, presented an update on the status of immigration law in the US. There were 20 attendees.

C. On March 31, we will gather for an evening event at Rockwell/ Republic to socialize over drinks and appetizers. Members have been asked to bring friends and colleagues so that we can communicate the benefits that WLAM has to offer in the Grand Rapids community and statewide.

D. On April 23, WLAM will host our annual Bring Your Child to Work Day luncheon from 12:00 – 1:00 PM at the Children’s Museum in Grand Rapids. Local judges will facilitate an enactment of certain famous women in history and the law for the children to guess their identities. After the luncheon and presentation, attendees will be able to tour the museum with their children.

### IV. 2015 Annual Meeting

On May 11, Western Region will host its Annual Meeting from 5:30 – 7:30 PM at Bistro Bella Vita in Grand Rapids. The reception will feature appetizers and drinks and we will honor Elizabeth Bransdorfer as our 2015 Outstanding Member. As we wrap up our activities for the year, we will announce results of the officer elections and provide information to attendees regarding our upcoming Annual Charity Softball Game.

### V. Annual WLAM vs. Judges Charity Softball Game

A. The 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Women Lawyers vs Judges Charity Softball Game took place on June 7, 2014. The teams tied, which was the best that WLAM had fared against the judges in four years. WLAM sold more than 550 game tickets and, along with donations from more than 40 corporate sponsors, raised \$18,000 to benefit the YWCA of West Central Michigan.

B. We are currently planning the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Charity Softball Game to take place from 5:00 – 7:00 PM on Saturday, June 6, 2015 at the Fifth Third Ballpark in Comstock Park. Proceeds of the corporate sponsorships and excess fees over normal game ticket costs will benefit the YWCA.

### VI. Annual Goals and Accomplishments

A. Increase membership by 5% from September 2014: We are on target to reach this goal if we maintain membership level from March until May.

B. Increase event attendance by 10% per event compared to 2013-2014: We have seen increased turnout at events in October, December and January over attendance at similar events last year.

C. Establish Regional Facebook page: Completed.

D. Increase proceeds raised for YWCA in connection with the 2015 charity softball game: With WLAM’s Softball Game Committee soliciting corporate sponsorships now and launching tickets sales in April, we will likely reach this goal.