



WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN

FOUNDED IN 1919

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

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WOMEN LAWYERS
ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN

103rd Annual Meeting

GRIT

JUNE 4 / 5, 2021
VIRTUAL MEETING

WLAM ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

Dear WLAM Members,

Historically, the outgoing president's message at the annual meeting is dedicated to a summary of the accomplishments of WLAM in the prior year. This year, however, was unique in more ways than one. We started the year with uncertainty—uncertainty about our futures, uncertainty whether we would ever see “normal” again and what that would even look like, and shifting our priorities in light of the never-ending COVID pandemic.



Roquia K. Draper

This quickly became the year of perseverance, and WLAM and its work continued to be a priority for our members. What the organization actually accomplished far exceeded everyone's wildest expectations. In fact, so much so that it would take this entire report to list each and every accomplishment by the state, its committees and the regions.

The year started with the swearing in of the new board on May 9, 2020 by Michigan Supreme Court Justice Megan Cavanagh...by Zoom of course. Breaking from tradition, we held our annual meeting by Zoom in September 2020. The theme of the annual meeting was *Lifting Women Up*, focused on continuing the cycle of success for those who have achieved it to reach back and lift those who need the guidance and encourage female leadership. In spite of the hardships, the Annual Meeting was a success and reinvigorated that fire in all of us.

The Annual Meeting paved the way for the success of the year to come. That success was a reflection of the hard work and innovative methods of our eight regions and committees, who found new ways to continue our work and mission, and to bring valuable education and programming to our members. The backbone of this organization are the committees and regions who put in the time, effort, work and collaboration to elevate this organization.

This year, the state board formed a new committee titled the Diversity and Inclusion Committee, dedicated to educating and engaging members in D&I efforts, to facilitate internal and external outreach with WLAM committees, other bar associations and members of the legal community to further D&I initiatives, and to ensure D&I is a component of our programming. We had several thought-provoking programming, including our most prominent event, the February 21-Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge©. This helped us all gain a deeper understanding into racial inequities and use the Challenge as a tool to have some difficult, introspective conversations.

One of our vital committees, the Candidate Endorsement and Rating Committee, spearheaded by Nicole Smithson and Amanda Narvaes, rated twenty-three impressive candidates for judicial appointments/elections. The Legal Affairs and Legislative Committee continued its work in furthering social justice to amend the judicial canons to preclude judges—the gatekeepers of justice—from becoming members of organizations that practice invidious discrimination. The Gender Equity Committee put on a series of Fearless Conversations, which included topics of branding, negotiating a salary, and other important topics, and participated in Women's History Month by recognizing female leaders in Michigan. These are just some of the many committees at WLAM that have made an impact.

We also added two new committees in 2021:

- (1) The **WLAMom Committee**, the brainchild of members Kirsten Silwanowicz and Patricia Woodruff, who shared the belief that moms of all kinds would benefit from a place to gather and share; and
- (2) The **WLAM Leadership Committee**, which has its first successful inaugural leadership class on May 15, 2021. This class was made up of an exceptional group of female law students that learned about leadership, networking and fostered relationships that will continue for years to come.

Thank you to each and every one of you who served on our committees this year. WLAM would not be what it is without your hard work, determination during difficult times, and when not possible, finding other ways to engage.

I want to also thank the regions immensely for their perseverance this year. It has been the regions that have not missed a step, and in fact, turned the negative of the pandemic into a positive to bring a breadth of phenomenal programming to members. Some of the great programming from our state and regions has included:

- *It's A Wrap!* A panel on hair discrimination about the real impact and toll of discrimination based on hair types, styles, and textures;
- Conversations with the authors of *Shortlisted: Women in the Shadows of the Supreme Court*;
- *Interrupting Implicit Bias* put on by our Western region;
- Learning from presentations such as *Cleaning the Technology Clutter* and *How to Negotiate a Pay Raise*;
- Collaborating with the University of Detroit Mercy Women's Law Caucus in hosting a viewing of the Documentary, *Period. End of Sentence.* to raise funds for the Menstrual Hygiene Donation Drive;
- An enlightening discussion with Dr. Tsedale Melaku, author of *You Don't Look Like a Lawyer: Black Women and Systemic Gender Racism*, hosted by our WLAM Mid-Michigan region;
- Financial advisors panel by the WLAM Tip of Mitt region;
- The hosting of many great books by each region's book clubs and trivia to keep us connected and learn new things about each other;
- Virtual fitness and mindfulness events to keep us physically connected and sane;
- Virtual tours of the *Notorious RBG* and *Nelson Mandela* exhibits;
- The Centennial Celebration of the Women's Right to Vote;
- Raising money for several philanthropic organizations;
- And so many more enlightening events.

The success is a testament to all of your hard work and commitment to passions embodied in the mission of the organization. It should be no surprise that we maintained our stable membership even in tough times.

I cannot end the year without giving a huge thank you and our appreciation to Hillary Walilko, our association manager with GCSI. She effortlessly kept up with our growing success, while also having a baby! I also want to send a special thank you to our Immediate Past President Alena Clark who was always available to do for WLAM, whether it be to answer questions, find solutions, or come up with ideas.

This was not any easy year. However, our actions and tenacity have solidified that not even a pandemic will stop the important work of WLAM. I hope you have seen this organization grow in many ways, and we all continue to be part of its future.

The theme of the Annual Meeting is Grit. This is so fitting, because WLAM has shown it has been and will continue to be all about passion and grit. Being involved in the leadership of WLAM has been one of the most unforgettable experiences. I want to congratulate incoming President, Ryan Kelly, and look forward to the year to come.

Roquia K. Draper

Roquia K. Draper
President (2020-2021), Women Lawyers Association of Michigan

2021 Statement of Operations

1. **Revenue from Member Dues:** Even with the extraordinary challenges faced by WLAM during the COVID-19 pandemic, dues revenue was minimally impacted. Total revenue for the year was \$49,521 following a record high of \$50,977 in 2019. Generally dues revenue has been increasing steadily over the last several years: \$45,669 in 2018, \$44,055.00 in 2017, \$42,255.00 in 2016, and \$41,485.00 in 2015. We see this as a sign of continued growth for the organization.



Susie Chalgian

2. **Revenue from Annual Meeting:** In 2020 WLAM pivoted to a virtual annual meeting in the fall. Many sponsors were already committed from the original meeting and therefore net profit for the meeting was substantially higher than in previous years at \$14,655.
3. **Dues Paid to Regions:** Dues paid to regions totaled \$14,168 in 2021. This was higher than budgeted, but shows that the association is growing in membership.
4. **Other Extraordinary Expenses in 2020:** Generally, due to fewer events, expenses were lower in 2020. Credit card fees were slightly higher than budgeted (\$1,845 versus \$1,500).
5. **Special Sponsorships:** Again this year, we were able to offer several regions special project funding and have increased the budget to \$2,500. We also spent just under \$800 on region development for our new Tip of the Mitt Region.

We were also able to offer sponsorships to NCWBA, IANGEL and a second donation to the “Warrior Lawyers” documentary project.

Following is the 2020 profit and loss detail.

Statement of Operations, FY 2020

	Jan - Dec 20
Income	
640 Dues	
640.10 Sustaining Member	
640.10.01 Sustaining - State	9,450.00
640.10.02 Sustaining - Region	3,525.00
640.10 Sustaining Member - Other	<u>0.00</u>
Total 640.10 Sustaining Member	12,975.00
640.20 Attorney 5+ Years	
640.20.01 Attorney 5+ - State	15,450.00
640.20.02 Attorney 5+ - Region	5,875.00
640.20 Attorney 5+ Years - Other	<u>0.00</u>
Total 640.20 Attorney 5+ Years	21,325.00
640.30 Attorney 1-5 Years	
640.30.01 Attorney 1-5 - State	3,862.50
640.30.02 Attorney 1-5 - Region	1,637.50
640.30 Attorney 1-5 Years - Other	<u>0.00</u>
Total 640.30 Attorney 1-5 Years	5,500.00
640.35 Attorney Govt/Non-Profit	
640.35.01 Atty Govt/NP-State	4,912.50
640.35.02 Atty Govt/NP-Region	2,062.50
640.35 Attorney Govt/Non-Profit - Other	<u>0.00</u>
Total 640.35 Attorney Govt/Non-Profit	6,975.00
640.40 Law Student	
640.40.01 Law Student - State	1,371.75
640.40.02 Law Student - Region	584.25
640.40 Law Student - Other	<u>0.00</u>
Total 640.40 Law Student	1,956.00
640.60 Attorney Retiree	
640.60.01 Atty Retiree-State	225.00
640.60.02 Atty Retiree-Region	100.00
640.60 Attorney Retiree - Other	<u>0.00</u>
Total 640.60 Attorney Retiree	325.00
640.85 Unlicensed JD	
640.85.01 Unlicensed JD-State	281.25
640.85.02 Unlicensed JD-Region	143.75
640.85 Unlicensed JD - Other	<u>0.00</u>
Total 640.85 Unlicensed JD	425.00

640.90 Paralegal	
640.90.01 Paralegal-State	30.00
640.90.02 Paralegal-Region	10.00
640.90 Paralegal - Other	0.00
Total 640.90 Paralegal	40.00
Total 640 Dues	49,521.00
660 Interest Income	1,062.52
680 Other Events/Activities	
680.40 WLAM Apparel/Merchandise	0.00
680.50 State Events	9,175.00
Total 680 Other Events/Activities	9,175.00
690 Annual Meeting Revenue	
690.10 Registration - Members	3,365.00
690.30 Sponsorships	14,500.00
690.50 Luncheon	0.00
690.60 Reception	0.00
690 Annual Meeting Revenue - Other	0.00
Total 690 Annual Meeting Revenue	17,865.00
Total Income	77,623.52
Gross Profit	77,623.52
Expense	
710 Board of Directors	
710.10 Board Meetings	81.12
710.20 Conference Calling	232.99
710.30 President/Officers	0.00
710.40 Directors/Officers Ins.	977.00
710 Board of Directors - Other	318.46
Total 710 Board of Directors	1,609.57
720 Committee Expenses	
720.10 CREC	0.00
720.20 Membership Committee	
720.20.3 Membership Mailings	31.00
720.20.5 Postage	188.21
Total 720.20 Membership Committee	219.21
720.30 Equal Pay Day	75.00
720 Committee Expenses - Other	25.00
Total 720 Committee Expenses	319.21
730 Licenses and Fees	20.00
740 Regions	
740.10 Region Dues	14,167.88
740.20 Special Project Funding	950.00

740.30 New Region Development	771.00
Total 740 Regions	15,888.88
750 Communications/Marketing	
750.40 Print/Promotion Material	0.00
750.50 WLAM Logo Merchandise	0.00
Total 750 Communications/Marketing	0.00
760 President Expenses	0.00
770 Member Benefits	0.00
780 Other Events/Activities	
780.50 State Events	4,233.61
Total 780 Other Events/Activities	4,233.61
790 Annual Meeting	
790.01 Speakers	327.95
790.10 Facility	
790.11 Audio/Visual	190.80
790.12 Food & Beverage	0.00
790.15 Hotel Overnights	0.00
790.10 Facility - Other	0.00
Total 790.10 Facility	190.80
790.20 Awards	
790.20.1 President	45.15
790.20.2 JLK	366.67
790.20.3 Judge	366.67
790.20.4 Region Member	390.52
790.20.5 Bledsoe Ford	366.66
Total 790.20 Awards	1,535.67
790.50 Meeting Materials/Signs	
790.50.01 Signs	0.00
790.50.02 Program	0.00
790.50.03 Materials	0.00
Total 790.50 Meeting Materials/Signs	0.00
790.60 Mail Services, Postage	523.15
790.80 Give-Aways/Gifts	60.61
790.90 Promotion/Marketing	878.72
790 Annual Meeting - Other	60.00
Total 790 Annual Meeting	3,576.90
800 Professional Fees	
800.10 Accounting Services	600.00
800.20 Administrative Services	26,400.00
800.30 Admin/Staff Travel	0.00
Total 800 Professional Fees	27,000.00

810 Dues & Subscriptions	
810.10 NCWBA	300.00
810.20 NAWL	<u>0.00</u>
Total 810 Dues & Subscriptions	300.00
820 Bank Fees	1,844.69
830 Web Resources	
830.10 Website Hosting/Domain	419.88
830.20 Website Development	<u>1,068.00</u>
Total 830 Web Resources	1,487.88
840 Office Supplies	
840.10 Copies	313.85
840.20 Stationery/Envelopes	2.00
840.30 Labels	<u>3.25</u>
Total 840 Office Supplies	319.10
850 Postage	65.06
860 Telephone	384.00
890 Charitable Contributions	<u>1,605.89</u>
Total Expense	<u>58,654.79</u>
Net Income	<u><u>18,968.73</u></u>

Membership Committee: This committee works together to encourage new membership and helps WLAM retain current members. The Committee maintains the Member Services Program (MSP). The MSP maintains and evaluates existing membership services, and creates programs to promote membership retention and growth. Further, the MSP evaluates future potential member services and submits recommendations to the Board for implementation.



Erin Klug

Membership Committee Goals and Accomplishments:

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Committee's focus this year centered on retention and assistance to members who were struggling. In the spring the Board approved a 90-day membership extension for any member who requested it. This was communicated to members through the regularly scheduled dues notices.

Another goal of the committee was to still show value while moving to all virtual events and programming. In coordination with the Program and other committees, WLAM held a record number of events over the course of the year with the vast majority being free to members.

Our current membership consists of:

Membership Category		Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21
Sustaining		55	53	50
Five + Years		206	210	208
Government/Non-Profit/Judiciary		136	136	138
One to Five Years		112	113	117
Retiree		14	14	14
Student		80	80	82
Paralegal		1	1	1
Unlicensed JD		5	6	6
Total		609	613	616

Regions**				
Great Lakes Bay		42	42	43
Macomb		59	59	60
Mid Michigan		84	86	87
Oakland		189	187	186
Tip of the Mitt (Northern)		23	23	24
Washtenaw		76	75	75
Wayne		154	152	155
Western		66	65	65
Grand Total		693	689	695

***Total for regions may be higher because some members belong to multiple regions*

This year the Technology and Communications Committee shared their technological savvy with WLAM's membership and took on projects to improve WLAM's communications and social media presence.


To kick off 2021 right, committee member, Marla McCowan, hosted a virtual lunch and learn on *Clearing the (Virtual) Clutter: Free Apps and Tech Tips to Get Organized and Stay Motivated During the Workday and Beyond*. To watch this program, check out WLAM's YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2OUArBm-uM4L7zyJVwUE6w/videos>.

The committee drafted a social media and electronic communications policy. The committee created a social media calendar. Committee members submitted articles on a variety of topics for *e-Focus*, WLAM's quarterly newsletter. In addition, committee members designed informational postings for WLAM's social media platforms.

Much gratitude to this year's hardworking committee members: Marla McCowan, Mais Moran, Colleen Shovlin, and Emily Thomas.

Submitted by,
Nicole M. Smithson, Chair





WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN
Social Media and Electronic Communications Policy

WLAM currently has the following means of regularly providing information to its members: *e-Focus*, a newsletter emailed quarterly; *WLAM News & Events*, a weekly email; social media (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter), and the calendar of events. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on the type of information that can be disseminated and instruction on how to get information disseminated. From time to time, we may send additional emails that are time sensitive at our discretion.

WLAM's Candidate Rating and Endorsement Committee did an impressive amount of work during the past year. After Zoom interviews of 17 judicial candidates in July 2020, the Committee made recommendations for WLAM to endorse those candidates for election to the bench. WLAM was thrilled when the two candidates they endorsed for the highest court in Michigan, Elizabeth Welch and Justice Bridget Mary McCormack, were elected and re-elected to the Michigan Supreme Court. After the 2020 election, WLAM rated and endorsed several candidates for gubernatorial appointment to the bench. CREC continues to rate and endorse candidates for appointment by Governor Gretchen Whitmer.

Submitted by,
Amanda Narvaes and Nicole M. Smithson, Co-Chairs

This year the legislative committee has been hard at work following the Michigan legislature and weighing in on legislation related to court reporter fees, court appointed attorney assignments, underage marriage, hair discrimination, and e-filing. We are still waiting on an update about our Judicial Canon proposal that relates to judicial membership in organizations that practice invidious discrimination from the Michigan Supreme Court, but we are hopeful an update will be forthcoming. The Legislative Committee would like to thank the Michigan legislators and lobbyists who have taken time to meet with the committee to make presentations about bills of interest, in particular Representative Sara Anthony.

Submitted by,
Alena M. Clark, Chair

This committee is responsible for developing supplemental programming (other than the Annual Meeting) at the state level to provide resources to our membership, to serve the community, and to raise awareness of issues affecting women in the legal profession and women in society within the scope of our Vision and Mission.

During the past year, despite the obvious Covid related challenges, WLAM had a year full of programming.

In the summer, we kicked off the virtual programming year with *Centennial Anniversary of the Women's Right to Vote!*, a virtual lecture and Q&A with Sara Egge, historian and author.

In October, WLAM partnered with the National Association of Women Judges and WLAM-Wayne to host a virtual Interactive Roundtable on Women's Health & Racial Disparities in Healthcare. A similar virtual museum tour exploring the life of MLF was also held.

In November, WLAM partnered with NCWBA to host a virtual Painting with a Twist event, a great time was had by all.

Also in November, the Programming Committee organized a very successful virtual museum tour of Notorious RBG, The Life and Times of Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

In the Spring, the Programming Committee partnered with the Gender Equity Committee to put on a series of Fearless Conversations, a set of 3 conversations tackling difficult topics facing women attorneys.

There were numerous other events put on by WLAM this virtual year by both other WLAM committees and regions – great work! The Programming Committee is available to provide assistance to the WLAM Regions and other WLAM Committees with the planning their programming and welcomes programming ideas from our members and regions.

This was an exciting year for the Historic Preservation Committee. The committee successfully nominated Lila Neuenfelt to the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame. In addition to being WLAM's president from 1931 to 1933, Neuenfelt was, among other things, Michigan's first female circuit court judge.

The committee partnered with the National Conference of Women's Bar Associations to host a virtual program featuring Professors Renee Knake Jefferson and Hannah Brenner Johnson in March. Professors Jefferson and Johnson discussed their recent book, *Shortlisted: Women in the Shadows of the Supreme Court*, and the fantastic women who were considered for the United States Supreme Court before Sandra Day O'Connor.

The committee started recording interviews with past WLAM presidents about their time in office. To watch these interviews, please check out the WLAM YouTube channel.

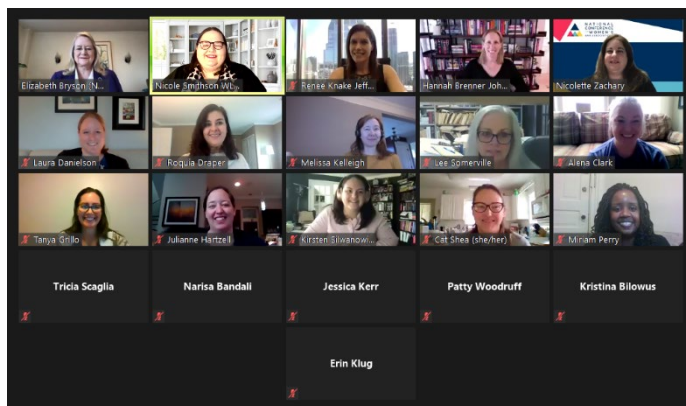
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2OUArBm-uM4L7zyJVwUE6w/videos>

Committee members contributed articles on women's legal history to *e-Focus*, WLAM's quarterly newsletter. They also generated material for WLAM's social media platforms—especially Kristina Billowus who profiled a different woman lawyer each day of women's history month.

Many thanks to this year's committee members: Kristina Bilowus, Erin Gianopoulos, Lauren Kissel.

Submitted by,

Nicole M. Smithson and Farrah Ramdayal



Shortlisted program and event flier



Former Justice Marilyn Kelly, WLAM president 1987-1988, being interviewed by Erin Gianopoulos

The Diversity and Inclusion Committee was formed in 2020 and is chaired by three exceptional WLAM members—Zenell Brown, Alena Clark and Roquia Draper. The focus of this year was to find innovative ways for WLAM to be recognize the diversity of its members and be inclusive of all.

The success of the Committee was forecasted from the beginning based on the profound interest of members wanting to serve on the Committee. In its first year of inception with 24 members, the Committee work consisted of the following:

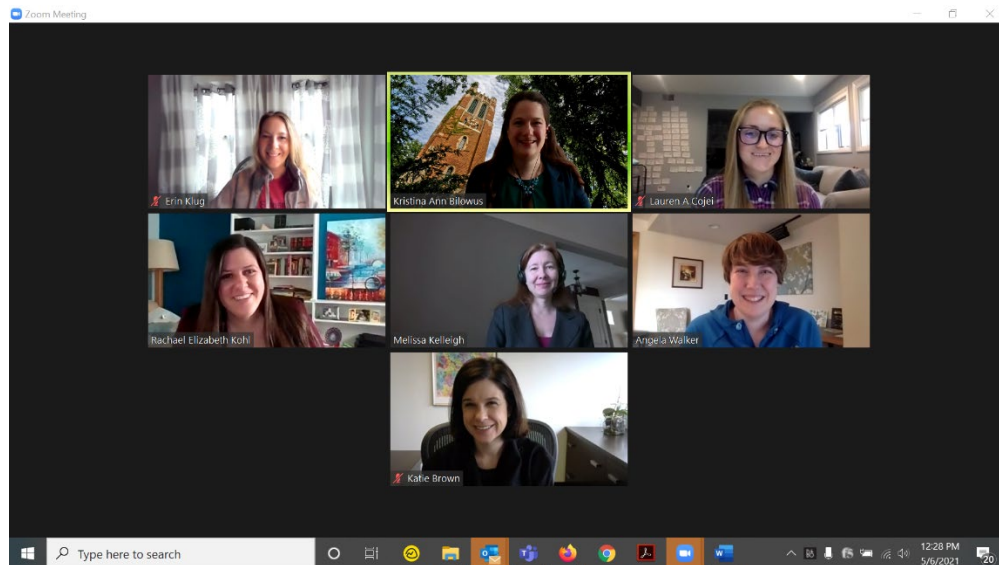
- **The 21-Day Challenge in February in recognition of Black History Month:** The D&I Programming Subcommittee hosted a 21-Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge February 1 - 21, 2021, with a wrap-up event on February 24, featuring our guest panelists, Honorable Kristen D. Simmons, Shenique A. Moss, and Michelle P. Crockett. This Challenge was open to all WLAM members and everyone who was interested in gaining and raising racial awareness and complexities of racial equity. Participants followed a syllabus and engaged in daily, intentional challenges that exposed different perspectives on Black history and culture. The finale was the wrap-up event where participants engaged in a deep discussion of systemic and institutional racism, ally-ship, educating others about the different experiences and left us encouraged to do more beyond the 21 days.
- **Book Discussion with Minda Harts, “The Memo”:** The subcommittee invited various women lawyer and judge groups (BWLAM and NAWJ) to join the September 25, 2020 event. Various regions paid for tickets for the law students to attend. The author Minda Harts facilitated an interactive discussion that simulated inequality in the workplace for women and offered various solutions to addressing those inequities.
- **Mentorship:** The D&I Committee members also volunteered for the UDM MentorJet program and the NAWJ Face of Justice program.
- **It’s A Wrap! Panel:** On March 2, 2021, the D&I Education Subcommittee facilitated a panel discussion on Hair Discrimination. Esteemed panelists included Hon. Angela Sherigan, Jennifer Douglas, Zainab Hazimi, Kimberly John, and Jennifer Stallings Dewey, and was moderated by Zenell Brown. The panel had over 50 attendees and included thought- provoking conversation about the importance of hair and hair coverings from various religious and cultural perspectives ranging from American-Indian, Muslim, and Afro- American. The Committee graciously thanks all those who shared with courage their diverse experiences regarding hair discrimination, and the importance of hair to one’s identity.
- **Pride Panel:** On June 23, 2021, another panel discussion will take place in honor of Pride month. Panelists include the Honorable Sara J. Smolenski, Angie Martell, and Robin B. Wagner, and moderated by Alena Clark. This panel will focus on the perspective of members of the LGBTQ+ community practicing law and the importance of pride month.
- **Involvement within the Community:** Engaged in discussions on legislation surrounding hair discrimination and avenues to address, including meeting with state representatives, committed to working with the ABA as allies of enhancing diversity in the workplace, provided D&I

resources on the WLAM website, and attended various programs sponsored by the SBM. We also shared our support of certain communities, including the Black and Asian American communities during what has been a difficult year.

I want to thank each and every D&I Committee member in making this year—our first year—a success. A special thank you to all our panelists this year who engaged and led deep—and personal—discussions and allowed us a safe space to learn from their experiences. Lastly, our events would not have been a success without those who participated with fervor.

Our commitment within the upcoming year is to make diversity and inclusion a consideration for every WLAM event.

Zenell Brown, Alena Clark and Roquia Draper
Co-Chairs



Overview:

The Gender Equity (GE) Committee was comprised of Erin Klug, Katie Brown, Lauren Cojei, Melissa Kelleigh, Angela Walker, Rachael Kohl, and Kristina Bilowus. The Committee's overarching goal was to bring relevant and meaningful programming highlighting issues that concerned gender equality. In addition to regular meetings, the Committee participated in and hosted several programs, as outlined below.

Activities and Programs:

- A. **Equal Pay Day (September 16, 2020):** Due to the pandemic, Equal Pay Day in Michigan was held in September 2020. The GE Committee partnered with the Michigan Equal Pay Day Coalition. The event was impressive with over 100 participants and prominent speakers. Governor Whitmer, Attorney General Dana Nessel, and Lilly Ledbetter spoke in addition to several other notable individuals. This event posed great opportunities for future speakers to present and inspiration as to keep moving forward with equal pay for women.
- B. **Gender Equity Issues in the Era of COVID-19 (October 22, 2020):** The Committee organized and held a virtual panel discussion, that WLAM Washtenaw co-sponsored and supported. Angela Walker, Kate Sharkey, and Mara Kent were the featured panelists and Kristina Bilowus moderated. The topics discussed included work/life balance, the greater disparity in gender roles during the pandemic, ways to improve and engage for equality, and also how the pandemic has impacted specific areas of law with respect to gender inequality. The event had over 30 registrants.
- C. **November Monthly Meeting (November 9, 2020):** The discussion focused on the next program "What's My Worth" and further plans for the remainder of the year. Erin Klug, who heads up the Programming Committee, introduced the concept of Fearless Conversations that she and Tanya Grillo have been working on. Fearless Conversations is premised on three simple, yet significant questions: What conversations do women lawyers have with colleagues that seem to be on replay?

What are the lawyerly topics we only discuss at our homes and avoid at the office? What are we afraid to ask about/talk about with our male counterparts? It was decided that the “What’s My Worth” Program would be the inaugural Fearless Conversation. Additionally, the program would be split into a three-part event, spanning three months, with each part addressing various aspects of worth, challenges, and insights for women in the legal profession.

- D. **Fearless Conversations Salary Negotiations (February 23, 2021):** The first segment featured Courtney Nichols of Plunkett Cooney with the topic of compensation questions and self-promotion in salary negotiations. An outreach to general WLAM membership, officers, and registrants was sent prior to each event with the questions collected and compiled for the speaker(s) by the Gender Equity Committee. The event had good participation, was recorded, and archived. An informal, unrecorded Q & A session was held after.
- E. **Fearless Conversation Self-Advocacy (March 25, 2021):** The second segment was held on March 25, 2021, with a discussion focused on self-advocacy for women in the law, the paradox of apologizing, and leadership. Syeda Davidson and Angela Baldwin were the featured speakers and Kristina Bilowus moderated. Great dialogue and content were generated from this presentation. This event was recorded and archived as well.
- F. **Fearless Conversations Creating Your Own Brand (April 22, 2021):** The third and final segment of the season focused on women as business owners and identified opportunities of worth, self-promoting, and creating their own brand. Elizabeth Joliffe and Rita White were the featured speakers. Like prior sessions, the event was recorded and included a robust dialogue from the audience. Overall these events encouraged intentional and insightful conversations for women in the legal profession regarding contemporary topics that are relevant and not discussed as often as they should.
- G. **Wrap-Up Committee Meeting (May 6, 2021):** The Committee met a final time to close the loop on projects and brainstorm new ideas for the year ahead. Those ideas included drafting surveys to our membership about relevant programming, partnering with the Domestic Violence Awareness Committee for a panel discussion, and drafting an article for publication. Overall, it has been a successful year with great opportunities for the year ahead.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kristina Bilowus, Chair

The Women Lawyers Association of Michigan Foundation enjoyed another very successful year of supporting women's education, raising over \$42,332 for scholarships. Fundraising activities are still in process for this year. For 2020-2021 the leadership team continued with Kristen Pursley as President, Paula M. Talarico as Treasurer and Nicole Wilinski as secretary. The Board is comprised of Ann E. Erickson Gault, Michelle Johnson-Tidjani, Stephanie Jones, Emily Peacock, Katherine Razdolsky Rothstein, Meghan Kennedy Riordan, Jennifer Salvatore, Peggy Lynch, Michelle Crockett, and Suzanne Sukkar.

A major goal for 2021 was to maintain our annual named scholarships, which we were thankfully able to do thanks to the generosity of our donors. For the second year in a row, the scholars were recognized during a virtual event, but we look forward to next year when we will hopefully celebrate all of our awardees from 2020, 2021 and 2022 in person.

Major continuing support was shown by corporations and law firms, particularly the Albert & Doris Pitt Foundation; Miller Canfield, Dickinson Wright, General Motors, Masco Corporation; Bodman PLC; Carole Chiamp; Dana Warnez, Dickinson Wright; Sue Ellen Eisenberg; Peacock Law; The Dobrusin Law Firm and Talarico Law. 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.

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, contains news, archives, photographs, profiles of student-awardees, and much more.

Awards made to Outstanding Women Law Students this year totaled \$38,500, awarded to 11 students attending Michigan's five accredited law schools. The 2021 Outstanding Women Law Students are:

General Motors Scholarship, sponsored by General Motors Corporation

Imani Ivery, University of Michigan Law School
Laura Atanasovski, University of Detroit Mercy School of Law

Miller Canfield Scholar, sponsored by Miller Canfield

Kathryn Kucyk, Western Michigan University Cooley School of Law

John Dalton and Marcy Lou Peacock Scholarship, sponsored by Peacock Law Firm

Joy Mohammed, University of Detroit Mercy School of Law

Kim Cahill Scholar, sponsored by the Women Lawyers of Michigan Foundation

Hanna Rutkowski, University of Michigan Law School

Florence King Patent Law Scholarship, sponsored by Women Patent Lawyers

Daniela Sanchez, University of Michigan Law School

Dawn Van Hoek Scholar, sponsored by Women Lawyers of Michigan Foundation

Aleanna Siacon, Wayne State University Law School

Dobrusin Law Scholarship, sponsored by The Dobrusin Law Firm

Nichole Van Blaricum, Wayne State University Law School

Dickinson Wright Scholar, sponsored by the Dickinson Wright Women's Network

Grace Vandegriff, Michigan State University College of Law

WLAM Foundation Scholarship, sponsored by Women Lawyers of Michigan Foundation

Julia Walczak, University of Detroit Mercy School of Law

Masco Scholarship, sponsored by Masco Corporation

Desirae Williams, Michigan State University College of Law

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.

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

Respectfully submitted,
Kristen Pursley,
Chair, WLAM Foundation
kpursley@patentco.com

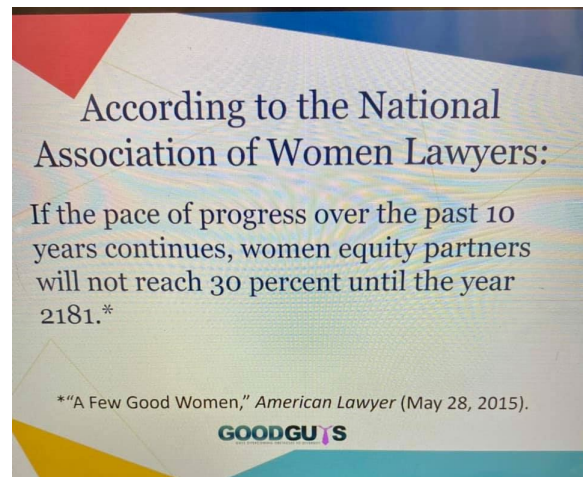
Women's Bar Leadership Summit

- Held: July 31, 2020
- First Virtual Summit – Owning the Change Reaction
- President – WLAM Board Member – Nicolette Zachary
- Released the new logo



Good Guys events

- GOOD Guys is a program designed to break the impasse in women's advancement by engaging people who have been missing from the conversation for too long – the GUYS! It is a model program designed for replication by member organizations. Acting in unison, we can make a bigger impact. This year, there have been 3 events:
 - **GOOD Guys from Detroit:** 11/12/2020 – partnered with WLAM and Michigan Diversity Council – moderated by Jerome Crawford and WLAM Board Member Zenell Brown
 - **Judicial Edition: Calling All GOOD Guys: Male Leaders are Key to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion–** 2/19/2021 - GOOD Guys program. Brief presentation about GOOD Guys program, presentation about the financial and workplace benefits of diversity and inclusion, and then a panel of judges to discuss why they are GOOD Guys, why other male leaders should be GOOD Guys, and how male leaders can lead change for the benefit of all.
 - **GOOD Guys Corporate Edition –** 4/30/2021 - presented about the progress toward gender equity at in-house legal departments, followed by a panel of corporate counsel male allies who will discuss practical strategies they have seen work when advancing women in the profession.



NCWBA and WLAM Painting with a Twist event -11/13/2020

A great evening painting the RBG portrait!



ABA Mid-Year

The National Conference of Women's Bar Associations hosted its annual midyear program, ***Eyes Wide Open: Interrupting Biases and Setting New Norms for Allyship within Organizations***, on February 18, 2021. The program provided information to various organizations, including bar organizations, about tools and methods that leadership can use to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion within their organization. This hands-on program provided planned content centered on the “nuts and bolts” of effectuating change within organizations. This year's program was dedicated to our former board member, Monica Parham, who unfortunately passed away last year but spent her life advocating for DEI.

Women on the Shortlist - collaborated with WLAM to co-host event

- Held March 23, 2021

A conversation with Professors Renee Knake Jefferson and Hannah Brenner Johnson, authors of *Shortlisted*, a book about women who did not quite make it to the Supreme Court.



NCWBA / Food from the Bar - Off To The Races

- Held May 4, 2021
- NCWBA and Food From The Bar (FFTB) hosted a free virtual watch party for the 147th running of the Kentucky Derby to discuss Food from the Bar campaigns and how this committee supports local Feeding America banks across the country.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATIONS – AND YOU!



**NCWBA/FFTB
OFF TO THE
RACES!**

**NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATIONS
DAY AT THE DERBY**

Please join NCWBA members on May 1 for a free virtual watch party of the 147th running of the Kentucky Derby and hear about *Food from the Bar* campaigns supporting local Feeding America food banks across the U.S. Wear your favorite Kentucky Derby hat, sip your bourbon, mint julep or beverage of choice, and join in conversations about Kentucky Derby local color and *Food from the Bar* activities. Prizes awarded for the most creative hats!

**SATURDAY
MAY 1, 2021**

3:30 pm/4:30 pm PDT
6:30 pm/7:30 pm EDT

Register [HERE](#).
Link to join will be sent
24-48 hours before the event.

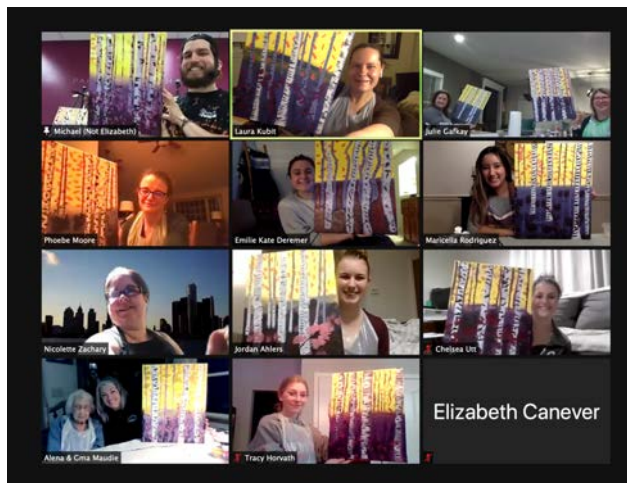
  

QUESTIONS? CONTACT KATHLEEN MCDOWELL OR CHRISTINA SIMPSON
KATHLEEN.MCDOWELL@MTO.COM / CHRISTINA@NCWBA.ORG



2021 Women's Bar Leadership Summit

- Scheduled: August 5-12 in mini sessions
- Theme: What's Your Why



Women Lawyers Association of Michigan Great Lakes Bay Region 2020-2021

Interim Board: Laura Kubit (President), Kailen Piper (Vice President), Emilie DeRemer (Treasurer), Chelsea Utt (Secretary), Maricella Rodriguez (Regional Rep), Krystal Pussehl (Membership Chair), and Alena Clark (Past President)



2020-2021 Regional Events:

- Monthly Board Meetings via Zoom
- Regional Development Meeting & Interim Board Swearing In - Nov 21 virtual
- Holiday Party - Dec 11 virtual trivia night
- Winter Wine Down - Feb 24 virtual Painting with a Twist
- Numerous virtual events with state & other regions

2021 Annual Meeting: June 10th at The Saginaw Club

Upcoming: Golf Outing - July 23 at Twin Oaks in Freeland





WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN

2020 ANNUAL REPORT ~ MACOMB REGION



Lindsay Ott
Treasurer



Lesia Fedorak
Secretary



Kim Dibartolomeo
Director at Large



Jenna Bommarito
Immediate Past President



Laura Polizzi
President



Kristina Joseph
Vice President



Lori Smith
Director at Large



Jennifer Lindquist
Director at Large



Tanya Grillo
Regional Representative



Erin Solaiman
Regional Representative



Golf Mixer

October 2, 2020 - Cracklewood Golf Club

On October 2, 2020, the Macomb Region hosted its annual Golf Mixer at Cracklewood Golf Club. It was our biggest turn out yet with over 60 golfers! Everyone had a great time and we are looking forward to next years event!



Meet the New Judges ~ Holiday Meeting

December 10, 2020 – Held VIA ZOOM

On December 10, 2020, the Macomb Region held a virtual Holiday Meeting by Zoom. Although we were unable to be in-person for our annual luncheon, we did have more than 25 members login and attend!

Special Guests:

Judge-Elect Jennifer Andary (42nd District Court)

Judge-Elect Kathleen Galen (38th District Court)



Fitness Event

March 3, 2021 – Held VIA ZOOM

On March 3, 2021, WLAM Macomb Region hosted a virtual Fitness Event free to all members. The Fitness Event included a Bootcamp Workout, Yoga Stretch and cool down, and nutritional advice, which was attended by members in the comfort of their own home.

A big thank you to the instructors for a great workout and advice:



Anthony Medley
Owner of FGFIT



Heather Panczyk
Yoga and Movement Specialist



Mindy Kinzer
Certified Health Coach

In October, our Region hosted a “Headshot Event” to enable members to have a professional headshot taken by a talented local photographer, Catherine Tamayo. Photos were taken outside on a beautiful fall day at the Meridian Historical Village. In lieu of payment, those who participated in the event were encouraged to make a donation to a local breast cancer charity in honor of breast cancer awareness month. The first-ever “Headshot Event” was a tremendous success, and, due to the interest and high participation levels, we plan to host a similar event in the future.

In December, our Region proudly awarded the 2020 Carolyn Stell Award to the Honorable Wanda M. Stokes, who serves on the bench of the 30th Circuit Court of Ingham County. This Award, which was named after the late Judge Carolyn Stell, the first female trial court judge in Ingham County, is conferred annually by our Region on a member of the bench or bar in recognition of her contributions to the legal community and to the advancement of women in the legal profession.



Stokes



Stell

Throughout the course of her incredibly impressive 30+-year legal career, Judge Stokes has made tremendous contributions to our State and local legal community and to the advancement of women in our profession and society. Since her appointment in 2018, she has served as a Circuit Court judge in Ingham County, a position to which she was recently elected for another term last November. Before her tenure on the bench began, she served our State in the Department of Attorney General in a variety of roles, ranging from Chief of Staff to Bureau Chief to Practice Group Leader. She also served as the Deputy Director of Michigan’s Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (“LARA”), where she oversaw the Talent Investment Agency (“TIA”), which encompasses our State’s Unemployment Insurance Agency, as its Executive Director. In addition to her work on behalf of our State government, she also made important contributions in private practice through her roles in the Office of General Counsel for Ford Motor Company and as an attorney and Director for the State of Michigan at Auto-Owners Insurance Company.

Outside of her daily work, Judge Stokes has also contributed significantly to our legal community through her active involvement and leadership roles in various bar associations, commissions and committees. Most notably, she served a 3-year term as a Commissioner on the Attorney Grievance Commission and a 10-year tenure as a member of the State Bar’s Character and Fitness Committee. In addition to her work as part of and on behalf of the legal community, Judge Stokes has also made important contributions to our community-at-large through her active involvement in and service to various local organizations. She served on the Board of Directors for the Boys and Girls Club of Lansing for 7 years; on the Board of Directors and as an Executive Committee member for the Capital Area United Way for 4 years; and on the Board of Directors for Highfields, a residential camp for troubled youth in Ingham County, for 6 years. Further, she has been actively involved with various organizations that serve and elevate women and advance their interests, including Michigan Women Forward and the YWCA of Lansing.

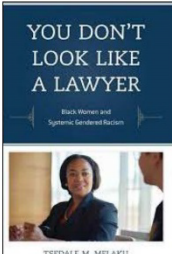
For all of these reasons, and many more, we were so pleased, proud and honored to recognize Judge Stokes with the 2020 Carolyn Stell Award. One of our Region's previous Award recipient, Judge Tom Boyd, presented the 2020 Award to Judge Stokes during a recorded Zoom presentation, which was later shared with our members.

As part of that same presentation, another former Award recipient, retired Judge David Jordon, also proudly presented the 2020 Carolyn Stell Memorial Scholarship to 3L MSU College of Law student JoAnne Pohl! This Scholarship was conferred upon Ms. Pohl in recognition of, *inter alia*, her academic achievements and community service and involvement. The purpose of the Scholarship, which includes a free Bar Review Course and \$1500 for incidental expenses, is to enable the recipient to apply, study for and pass the Michigan Bar Examination – and to, ultimately, gain admission to the State Bar of Michigan.



Pohl

WLAM'S MID-MICHIGAN REGION
INVITES YOU TO PARTICIPATE IN A
VIRTUAL BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION ON
**YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE A LAWYER:
BLACK WOMEN AND SYSTEMIC GENDERED RACISM**



**YOU DON'T
LOOK LIKE
A LAWYER**
Black Women and
Systemic Gendered Racism

TSEDAILE M. MELAKU

WHEN?
Monday, February 15th
From 1:00 to 2:30 P.M.


HOW?
Via Zoom
Meeting ID: 850 2856 6376
Passcode: 639624

RSVP?
Send e-mail to
wlam.mid.michigan@gmail.com
by Friday, February 12, 2021

We are honored and pleased to announce that author Dr. Tsedale M. Melaku has agreed to join us for our discussion.

If you have questions or topics for discussion, please e-mail them in advance to wlam.mid.michigan@gmail.com.

Book is available for purchase at
<https://www.amazon.com/You-Dont-Look-Like-Lawyer/dp/1538107928>



In February, our Region hosted a “Virtual Book Club Discussion” on the incredibly important and thought-provoking book, You Don't Look Like a Lawyer: Black Women and Systemic Gendered Racism, by Tsedale Melaku, Ph.D. We were so fortunate that Dr. Melaku, a nationally renowned scholar, author and educator whose work has been featured in the New York Times, the Harvard Business Review, Bloomberg Law and on the Today Show, agreed to join us for the discussion. Dr. Melaku is currently a Postdoctoral Research Fellow with the Institute for Research on the African Diaspora in the Americas & the Caribbean at the Graduate Center, City University of New York, and her scholarly interest is on race, gender, class, workplace inequities, systemic racism, intersectionality, organizations and diversity – all topics and themes which she masterfully explores in You Don't Look Like a Lawyer. We were so grateful that she shared her time, insights and wisdom with our members during an

engaging discussion about the book and her scholarly work.

In March, our Region co-hosted a virtual “Yoga for a Cause” event with the Young Lawyers Section of the Ingham County Bar Association (“ICBA-YLS”). Participants were encouraged to make a donation in lieu of a class registration fee. All proceeds were donated to the Women’s Center of Greater Lansing, an organization whose mission is to provide “valuable, innovative resources and services in an atmosphere that fosters mutual support, insight, and growth for women of all intersectionalities as they strive to realize their unique potential.”



In June, our Region hosted our 2021 Annual Meeting. The Meeting included an engaging panel discussion on *“How Covid Has Changed the Landscape for Working Women at Work and At Home”* with experts in business, education, public health and public policy, including State Representative Sarah Anthony; CEO of the Michigan Women’s Commission, Cheryl Bergman; former Interim Dean and Professor at MSU College of Law, Melanie Jacobs; and Director of Government Relations for Beaumont Health, Megan Blue. During the Meeting, we also honored 22 *“Women Lawyer Stars”* in our Region who achieved important professional milestones or received notable accolades or awards during the preceding membership year. Honorees included the following:

- **Ernschie Augustin** – Elected to Serve on ICBA Board of Directors and as President of Davis-Dunnings Bar Association
- **Hon. Laura Baird** – Selected as Recipient of ICBA’s 2020 Thomas E. Brennan Lifetime Achievement Award
- **Hon. Cori Barkman** – Appointed by Gov. Whitmer to 29th Circuit Court Bench for Clinton and Gratiot Counties
- **Kristina Bilowus** – Selected as Recipient of 2021 Class of “Up & Coming Lawyers” by MI Lawyers Weekly and of WLAM’s 2021 Regional Leadership Award
- **Mary Bowen** – Selected as Recipient of 2020 Class of “Women in the Law” by Michigan Lawyers Weekly
- **Susie Chalgian** – Selected as Recipient of 2021 Class of “Up & Coming Lawyers” by MI Lawyers Weekly
- **Mary Chartier** – Selected as Recipient of ICBA’s 2020 Leo A. Farhat Outstanding Attorney Award and Successfully Exonerated 2 Wrongfully Convicted Michigan Men
- **Colline Cheltenham** – Opened/Founded Her Own Law Firm, “Cheltenham Law, PLLC” in 2021
- **Jackie Dupler** – Appointed by Gov. Whitmer to Michigan Board of Accountancy
- **Kathleen Gleeson** – Promoted to Division Chief of Transportation Division of Michigan Department of Attorney General
- **Christina Grossi** – Selected as Recipient of National Association of Attorneys General Senior Staff of the Year Award
- **Hon. Carol Koenig** – Elected to 30th Circuit Court bench for Ingham County
- **A. Michelle Lane** – Selected as Recipient of ICBA’s 2020 Camille S. Abood Distinguished Volunteer Award
- **Jodi Latuszek** – Promoted to Senior Director of Administration at the State Court Administrative Office



- **Lori K. Montgomery** – Selected as Recipient of ICBA’s 2021 “Top 5 Under 35” Award
- **Hon. Michelle Rick** – Elected to District 4 of Michigan Court of Appeals
- **Hon. Shannon L.W. Schlegel** – Elected to 29th Circuit Court bench for Clinton and Gratiot Counties
- **Tiffany T. Shelton** – Selected as Recipient of ICBA’s 2021 “Top 5 Under 35” Award
- **Ann M. Sherman** – Selected as Recipient of National Association of Attorneys General 2020 Meritorious Service Award
- **Carol Siemon** – Elected as Prosecutor for Ingham County
- **Katie Tucker** – Promoted to Shareholder at Sinas Dramis Law Firm and Selected as Recipient of WLAM’s 2021 Regional Leadership Award
- **Marisa Vinsky** – Selected as Recipient of ICBA’s 2021 “Top 5 Under 35” Award and Successfully Exonerated 2 Wrongfully Convicted Michigan Men



When the world shut down in the spring of 2020, the Women's Bar Association – Oakland Region pivoted, offering remote programming and networking opportunities for its members.

Beginning in June 2020, the WBA – Oakland Region launched its monthly book club—aptly named the Literary Ladies Book Club. The brain-child of Recording Secretary, Brittany Mouzourakis, the group typically meets from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. on the last Thursday of the month via Zoom. Attendees take turns leading the discussion. To date, the group has read a wide array of works, including non-fiction, autobiographies, biographies, self-help, and inspirational. In June 2020, the group kicked off with *The League of Wives: The Untold Story of the Women Who Took On The U.S. Government to Bring Their Husbands Home From Vietnam*, by Heath Hardage Lee.

In the months that followed, the group also read: *Just Mercy*, by Bryan Stevenson; *Own It*, by Sallie Krawcheck; *Garbage Bag Suitcase*, by Shenandoah Chefalo (with a special appearance by the author); *A Delusion of Satan: The Full Story of the Salem Witch Trials*, by Frances Hill; *Arc of Justice: A Saga of Race, Civil Rights, and Murder in the Jazz Age*, by Kevin Boyle; *Big Friendship*, by Aminatou Sow and Ann Friedman; *168 Hours: You Have More Time Than You Think*, by Laura Vanderkam; *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, by Maya Angelou; *The Woman Who Smashed Codes*, by Jason Fagone; *She Come By It Natural: Dolly Parton and the Women Who Lived Her Songs*, by Sarah Smarsh; and *Dead Man Walking*, by Sister Helen Prejean.

Although usually quiet over the summer, the board continued to support each other from afar with unique programming. In July, the WBA – Oakland Region partnered with WLAM Wayne for a showing of 13th: From Slave to Criminal with One Amendment, followed by a discussion moderated by Zenell Brown. In August, the board celebrated 100 years since the ratification of the 19th Amendment with a Netflix party viewing of Suffragette.

In November 2020, the WBA – Oakland Region partnered with WLAM Wayne to host a virtual charity auction benefiting Empty Bowls. Moderated by President-Elect, Kristina Bilowus, the event was a smashing success, with bidding wars, door prizes, a cooking demonstration, and a bartending class.

In December 2020, the WBA – Oakland Region supported Operation Good Cheer, purchasing gifts for three children. The board is optimistic that it will be able to make “Christmas wishes come true” for more children next year, and hope to make it an annual giving event. Several board members made independent donations, and members were also invited to “adopt” their own children, as well.

The WBA – Oakland Region also held its monthly networking Bar Briefs remotely, often with a suggestion for a themed mixed drink. The most well-attended was the Valentine's Day themed virtual happy hour in February 2021, complete with Valentine's-themed trivia.

For its annual fundraiser, the board decided to conduct a sweatshirt drive. With special design help from Treasurer, Tanya Murray, and delivery help from President, Katie Pacynski, the drive not only provided members with some fun flair, but also raised the money for the Sarah Kilgore Wertman Scholarship for women law students.

Behind the scenes, the board further kept busy throughout the year with monthly meetings, including a special board building meeting in March 2021. Vice President, Stephanie Brochert, took time out of her busy schedule to nominate deserving female attorneys for awards; Communications Secretary, Kristin Fernandez, worked hard to make sure the members were informed of all events via the e-blasts; and

Past President, Erin Flynn, guided everyone with her experience on the board, and occasionally gave the board peaks at her newborn, Henry.

At the conclusion of the year, the board hosted its Annual Meeting virtually, for the second time. Judge Debra Nance was awarded the Joan Young Judicial Excellence Award, with a special introduction by Judge Denise Langford Morris. Ashley Lowe was awarded the Evelyn Forrest Distinguished Advocate Award, with a heartfelt introduction by her former law students, Erin Flynn and Nicole Gettler. Enterprising law student, Hannah Murphy, was awarded the Sarah Killgore Wertman Scholarship. Judge Nance graciously swore in the new Executive Board.

The WBA – Oakland Region is already preparing for another busy year, with a hopeful return to in-person events. The Literary Ladies Book Club meets on Thursday, June 24, 2021, to discuss *You Are a Badass: How to Stop Doubting Your Greatness and Start Living an Awesome Life*, by Jen Sincero. All are welcome to attend—even those who are unable to find the time to read the book. Family Fun Day will take place on Saturday, July 10, 2021, from 12:00 to 3:00 p.m., and the Summer Planning Meeting will take place on Saturday, August 14, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Submitted by,
Nicole Getter, Regional Representative





WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN (WLAM)
TIP OF THE MITT REGION

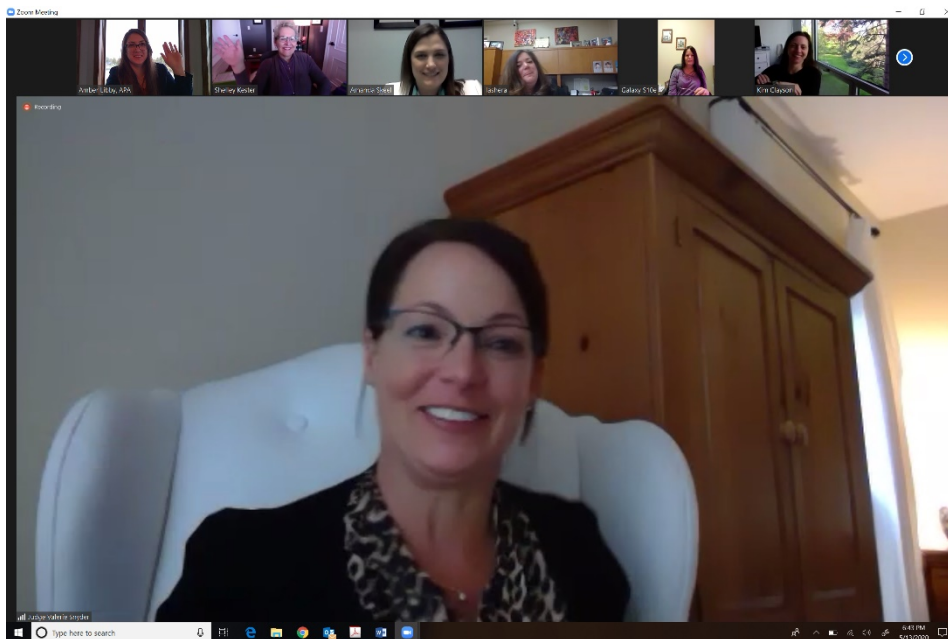
ANNUAL REPORT
May 2020 – May 2021

The **Tip of the Mitt Region's** first year was a challenging but rewarding one. Due to the COVID-19 virus and pandemic, the ability to meet in-person ceased altogether, and the **Region** found it difficult to grow membership at this critical stage in their development. However, the Board adapted to online platforms and was able to provide a number of interesting, informative, and creative events to inspire members and engage prospects.

This inaugural year kicked off with the virtual election of the 2020 – 2021 **Tip of the Mitt Region** Board in early May 2020. The elected Board was composed of the following Directors:

- *President*, Amanda Skeel
- *Vice President*, Katrina Martin
- *Secretary*, Amber Libby
- *Treasurer*, Honorable Valerie Snyder
- *Regional Representative*, Shelley Kester
- *Directors at Large*, Lori Schmeltzer; Marie Walker; Melissa Goodrich; Melissa Wangler

The 2020 – 2021 **Tip of the Mitt Region** Board was sworn in on May 13, 2020 by WLAM (two-time) Past President, Honorable Angela Sherigan, via Zoom.



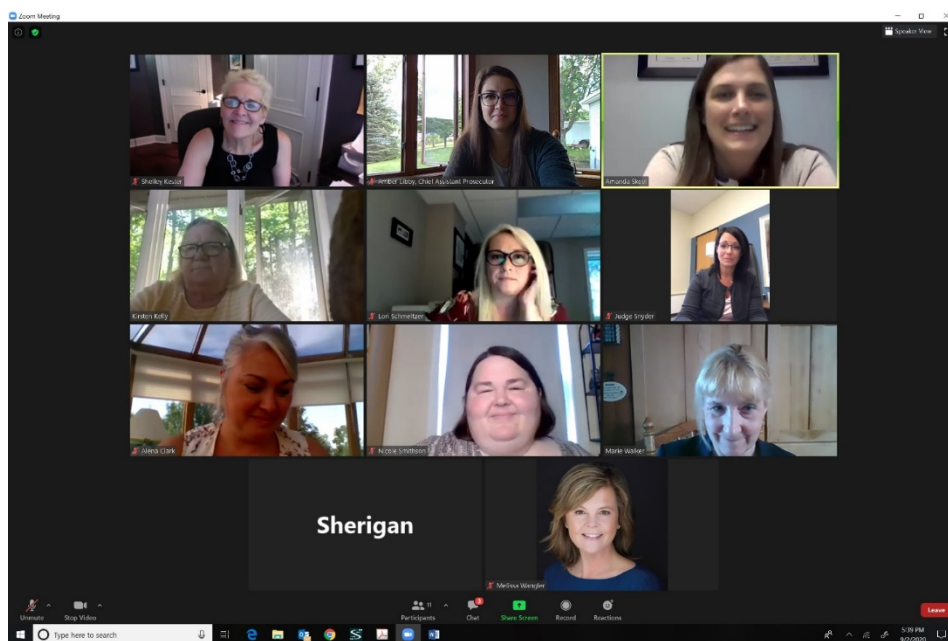
The **Region** also formed several committees including the *Events Committee*, the *Outreach Committee*, and the *Annual Meeting Committee*. The *Events Committee* initiated zoom social hours for members and prospective members, as well as informative and

interactive webinars featuring topics and guest speakers. The *Outreach Committee* committed to reaching area lawyers and judges via social media, e-mail lists, and regular mail for invitation to learn more about the **Tip of the Mitt Region**.

The Board came to the difficult decision to not hold a 2020 Annual Meeting because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Those who had already purchased tickets were allowed to choose whether to have the ticket price refunded or donated back to the **Region** or to the Women's Resource Center of Northern Michigan, Inc. This resulted in a donation of \$85 to the WRC and \$170 donated to the Region's general fund.

In August 2020, the **Region**, through President Skeel, surveyed the Board and general membership as to regional priorities for the **Tip of the Mitt Region**. The survey indicated that priorities of the Board and general membership are the advancement of the interests of women in the legal profession, the administration of justice, mentoring programming between veteran and newer attorneys in the Region, networking opportunities, legal education training, growing the organization and supporting each other's professional goals. The Board worked to tailor the **Region's** programming to these priorities and used them to set goals for the remainder of the term.

At the September 2020 Board meeting (virtually), the **Region** was fortunate to receive a virtual visit with the Honorable Judge Angela Sherigan, Honorable Judge Kristen Frank Kelly, and WLAM Immediate Past President Alena Clark to discuss their legacies, positions, and roles in WLAM. Those present discussed the benefits and challenges that a new WLAM region can face and how members coming from different professional backgrounds and life experiences can all come together to move a Region forward.



In December 2020, the *Events Committee* (through Melissa Wangler – *Director at Large*), created a Criminal Justice Reform webinar panel with Northern Michigan representatives from Michigan Indigent Defense Counsel (MIDC). The panel was a

presentation and Q & A via Zoom for membership to learn about the MIDC, criminal justice reform initiatives, and juvenile justice reform initiatives in Michigan. The event was well attended and informative. The **Region** also held a President's Giving Challenge, which encouraged members to donate to local charities of their choice. Participating members who made a charitable donation were entered in a drawing for a \$100 Amazon gift certificate, which was won by Amanda Szukala.

In March 2021, the *Events Committee* (through Shelley Kester – *Regional Representative*), created a Financial/Retirement Planning webinar panel with Northern Michigan accounting and financial planning professionals to advise those in the legal profession about carving out financial security for retirement and investments. The panel was a presentation and Q & A via Zoom for membership to learn about different investment and retirement options for those who are self-employed as lawyers and in general for proper retirement planning. The event was also well attended and informative.

A graphic titled "Financial Advisors Panelists" with a green border. It features an icon of a clipboard with a checklist and a target with an arrow in the top left. At the bottom center is an icon of a balance scale with dollar signs on the pans. The text lists three panelists: Dawn Hemming, Autumn Soltysiak, and Brian Ursu, each with their title, company, email, and office phone.

Financial Advisors Panelists

Dawn Hemming, MBA - Founder & President, Wealth Management Advisor
Hemming & Wealth Management
Email: Dawn@hemmingwm.com
Office Phone: 231-922-2900

Autumn Soltysiak, CFP - Partner, Wealth Management Advisor
Hemming & Wealth Management
Email: Autumn@hemmingwm.com
Office Phone: 231-922-2900

Brian Ursu, CFP - President and Advisor
Intentional Wealth Advisors, LLC
Email: brian.ursu@intentionaladvice.com
Office Phone: 231-933-0846

Although growing memberships and deepening relationships amongst legal professionals in Northern Michigan was difficult for our **Region** this past year in the throes of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board and membership did their best to adapt and stay connected via Zoom with regular Board meetings, hosting interactive webinars and social hours. We are looking forward to what the 2021-22 term will bring.

Women Lawyers Association of Michigan Washtenaw Region Annual Report, 2020 - 2021

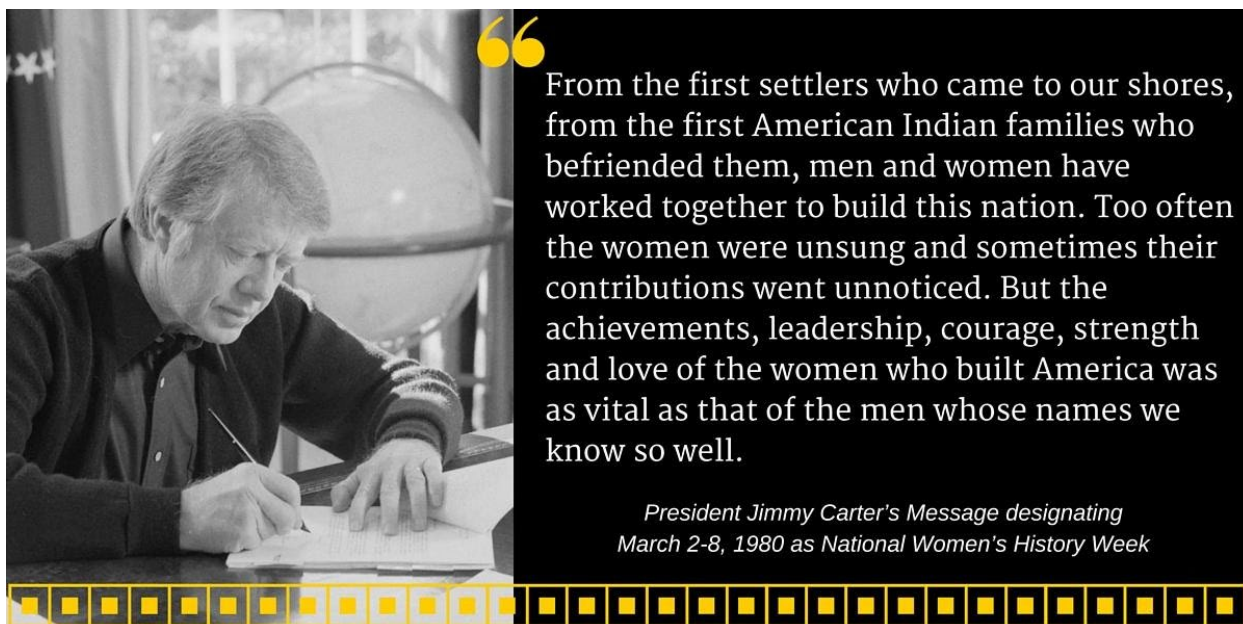
In the beginning of March 2020, the WLAM Washtenaw Board had already booked the location for our Annual Meeting scheduled for May 28, 2020, at the Original Cottage Inn on E. William in Ann Arbor. WLAM Washtenaw has held our Annual Meeting at this popular local venue for at least the past 15 years. Little did we know that we would soon have to cancel the in-person event and hold it virtually. Later, that same month, on March 23, 2020, our Washtenaw President, Alison Love, would send a message to our members with a heavy heart stating:

“We hope that this letter finds you and your loved ones healthy during this difficult time. All WLAM Washtenaw Region events have been cancelled until further notice due to the COVID-19 virus. . . We hope to stay in touch and support one another the best that we can during these uncertain times. We'll get through this together.”

Times were uncertain and frightening. However, in the same newsletter informing members that our in-person events were cancelled, we looked forward and asked for letters of interest welcoming members to join the Board who had an interest in serving. We also commemorated Women’s History Month.



An excerpt from President Jimmy Carter’s message designating March 2-8 as National Women’s History Week was included in the Newsletter and follows:



The WLAM Washtenaw Board was sworn in via Zoom, then a new (to us) platform that would soon become all too familiar in the coming months. WLAM Washtenaw Past President and current District Court Judge, the Honorable Anna Frushour, swore in the new Board who included:

President, Cassandra Musser
 Vice President - Kristin Davis
 Treasurer - Lillian Saba
 Secretary - Kaylin Wilson
 Regional Representative - Kym London
 Communications Chair - Jinan Hamood
 Membership Chair - Frances Hollander

We were forced to work from home to keep our practices up and running. Many of us had to lay off employees, give up office space and otherwise adjust the “new normal” of 2020 which included face masks, hand sanitizer (by the gallons), sanitizing wipes, and toilet paper hoarding (!).

2020 was a year of uncertainty, hardship, and loss which was felt by all of us on September 18, 2020, when we learned that Supreme Court Justice, Ruth Bader Ginsberg, passed away at the age of 87. However, 2020 *was also a time to be grateful* and all members of WLAM Washtenaw were (and are) grateful for Justice Ginsberg’s years of advocacy as a leading voice for gender equality, women’s interests, and civil rights and liberties.



WLAM Washtenaw continued to look to a brighter future and held virtual events to celebrate milestones for women, lend helping hands to one another, and to continue moving forward.

October and November 2020

On October 12, 2021, WLAM Washtenaw with the Lawyers and Judges Assistance Program (LJAP) held a Zoom joint seminar regarding Compassion Fatigue. We learned that compassion fatigue is the cumulative physical, emotional, and psychological effect of exposure to traumatic stories or events when working in a helping capacity, combined with the strain and stress of everyday life. The purpose of the seminar was to help participants recognize and deal with compassion fatigue in our daily lives.

Symptoms of Compassion Fatigue include:

- Perceiving the resources and support available for work as chronically outweighed by the demands
- Having client/work demands regularly encroach on personal time
- Feeling overwhelmed and physically and emotionally exhausted
- Having disturbing images from cases intrude into thoughts and dreams

- Becoming pessimistic, cynical, irritable, and prone to anger
- Viewing the world as inherently dangerous, and becoming increasingly vigilant about personal and family safety
- Feeling numb in professional and personal life; experiencing increased problems in personal relationships
- Withdrawing socially and becoming emotionally disconnected from others
- Becoming demoralized and questioning one's professional competence and effectiveness
- Secretive self-medication/addiction (alcohol, drugs, work, sex, food, gambling, etc.)
- Becoming less productive and effective professionally and personally.

On October 22, 2020, two WLAM Washtenaw Past Presidents, Katherine Sharkey and Angela Walker were panelists for WLAM Statewide Gender Equity Committee Zoom Panel Presentation regarding Legal Issues Impacting Women During the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Throughout November 2020, WLAM Washtenaw members dropped off donations of non-perishable and canned goods for Food Gatherers ahead of Thanksgiving at the Offices of Washtenaw President Sandy Musser and Past-President Alison Love, who delivered the donations to Food Gatherers. Food Gatherers rescues food that would otherwise go to waste from more than 300 local sources including food retailers, restaurants and food wholesalers to provide direct food assistance in the form of hot meals, nutritious snacks or emergency groceries to low-income adults, seniors and children in Washtenaw County.



Pre-pandemic photo of Food Gatherers Volunteers include (standing) Robin Wagner, Judge Karen Valvo, Nora Wright, Judge Darlene O'Brien, Charlotte Croson, Lori Burke, Alison Love (first row), Patricia Reiser, Kym London.

In November 2020, we celebrated our democracy by voting and electing the first woman as Vice President of the United States --- and not only a woman, but a woman of color.



DECEMBER 2020



WLAM Washtenaw held its annual holiday party via Zoom on December 20, 2020, from 5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Members enjoyed games, including a game of Holiday Family Feud and door prizes delivered to winners after the party.

MARY FOSTER AWARD RECIPIENT

The Honorable Judge Judith Levy was the recipient of the 2020 Mary Foster Award. Judge. Levy is a federal judge on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan. She was nominated for the position by President Barack Obama on July 25, 2013, and the U.S. Senate confirmed her nomination on March 12, 2014. She served as an assistant U.S. attorney in the Eastern District of Michigan from 2000 through her appointment and was the Civil Rights Unit Chief from 2010-2014. Prior to that role, she was a trial attorney with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in Detroit. Judge Levy specialized in large civil rights cases, including fair housing, fair lending, police misconduct, juvenile justice, and disability law.

At Michigan Law, she team-teaches seminars about policing and fair housing. Judge Levy received her BS from the University of Michigan and her JD from Michigan Law. Prior to her clerkship with U.S. District Judge Bernard A. Friedman in Detroit, she was an elected union official and chief negotiator for the service and maintenance employees at the University of Michigan for eight years.

Much like Mary Foster, Judge Levy was a pioneer in her field. She dealt with obstacles women face in the legal profession in general and then of course she dealt with obstacles members of the LGBT community face in life. She persevered and stayed true to her beliefs and values which demonstrated by the career path she blazed for many other women like her.

The Mary Foster Award is bestowed annually to a member of our organization whose leadership, talent, and significant contributions impact women in our legal profession and benefit our general community as a whole.

JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 2021

Meet and Greet with New Judges

On Friday, January 15, 2021, WLAM Washtenaw invited members to a virtual meet and greet with the newest members of our local bench including:

Hon. Miriam A. Perry - 15th District Court
Hon. Tracey Van Den Bergh - Washtenaw County Trial Court
Hon. Erane Washington - 14B District Court

All of the judges were generous with their time and in answering member's questions.

Valentine's Day Gift Exchange

Members signed up for the first annual Valentines Day Gift Exchange. Participants were paired with a secret valentine who delivered a gift to that person on Valentines Day. All those who participated had a great time, enjoyed their gifts, and discovering the identity of their Valentine.

MARCH – MAY 2021

In March 2020, WLAM Washtenaw Board of Directors introduced the proposed slate of candidates for the incoming 2021-2022 Board of Directors and planned upcoming events. At this point, many of us had been fortunate enough to have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine and the rest of us were on the waiting list to be vaccinated. We even dared to believe that we would be able to hold in-person events in the coming year.

New WLAM Washtenaw Board Sworn-In

The new 2021-2022 WLAM Washtenaw Board of Directors was elected and sworn in on June 7, 2021, at noon by the Honorable Erane Washington. Judge Washington is one of our newly elected District Court judges and we were all grateful that she generously took time out of her busy docket to swear the new Board in and congratulate each of us. Our new Board includes:

President: Kristin Davis
Vice President: Jinan M. Hamood
Treasurer: Lillian Saba
Secretary: Kaylon Wilson
State-Wide Representative: Kym London
Immediate Past-President: Sandy Musser
Communications Chair: Frances Hollander
Membership Chair: John Reiser

Immediately after the swearing-in, WLAM President, Kristin Davis, held her first board meeting and we planned our first in-person event since March 2020. We are off to a great start of a new year. Congratulation Madame President!



This was a challenging and unprecedented year for all of us. As we dealt with the global pandemic, the Wayne Region worked to prepare programming that would continue to provide the benefits that our members expect: professional development, networking, and education.

Over the summer we partnered with BWLAM to present an in-depth panel on Women's Experiences in the Workplace and Legal Profession.



BOOK CLUB

This year we hosted monthly book clubs. Over the year we read:

(1) How To Be An Anti-Racist; (2) Becoming; (3) Invisible Women: Data Bias in a World Designed for Men; (4) This Bridge Called My Back; (5) Whisper Network; (6) Men Explain Things to Me; (7) The Gender Games: The Problem with Men and Women, From Someone Who Has Been Both; (8) Such a Fun Age; (8) In the Land of Invisible Women – a Female Doctor's Journey in the Saudi Kingdom.

WLAMoM

Kirsten Silwanowicz and Patty Woodruff also created a new WLAMom Committee. This committee was met with such a positive response, it was turned into a state-wide WLAM Committee.

WELLNESS:

We made an effort to provide health and wellness opportunities to our members this year. With so many of us stuck at home and struggling with the stress of the pandemic, we offered yoga, zumba, and meditation.



- On August 20 from 5:30 to 6:30 we hosted a Yoga and Guided Meditation virtual event with Lauren Laudani.
- We also hosted a virtual Zumba event on September 23.
- We hosted a Mindfulness Workshop with the Grand Rapids Center for Mindfulness on Monday Nov. 30 at 6:00 pm



WINE & GARDEN PARTY

Our Wine and Garden Party was August 27. This was well attended. We had a guided wine tasting and breakout rooms for networking. It was nice to see that most people had met up with one or two other ladies for the event.



Our Director of Membership, Jacki Culler, and Past President, Jen Dewey, helped plan a legal aid event for underserved communities.

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

In October, we held our Membership Drive Trivia Event! We had several fun, RBG themed prizes! Fun was had by all.

FOR AN IN-PERSON LEGAL AID AND RESOURCE EVENT!
 Saturday, September 26 | 12pm - 4pm
 Parking lot at the corner of E Larned and St. Antoine across from University of Detroit Law School (631 E. Jefferson Ave., Detroit, MI 48226)
 This event will provide free legal advice and access to other very important resources. Get access to:

Legal Resources:

- Housing issues (eviction, landlord regulations, etc.)
- Probate and property transfer issues
- Assistance with applying for unemployment benefits

Other Resources:

- Voter Registration
- Census assistance
- Economic resource information

Organized/sponsored by:

- Jackson-Bridge, PLLC
- Women Lawyers Association of Michigan
- Wayne Region
- The Financial Empowerment Center
- Office of Jamar Ayers, Detroit City Council
- Jackson Legal Aid

COVID precautions:

- Outdoor event in open air tent
- No registration for legal services required
- Masks required
- Mask, gloves and hand sanitizer will be provided
- We will be limiting social distance protocols
- We will limit the number of people at the event at any given time and control the flow of traffic

Volunteers sign up online at: <http://wlam.com/2020/09/26/>
 Attendees sign up for a legal appointment at: <https://jacksonlegalaid.org/2020/09/26/>
 Reservations must be made to attend this event. To RSVP please contact: Jennifer Stallings Dewey at 313.223.3498 or jdewey@jacksonbridge.com.

We partnered with the National Association of Women Judges for an upcoming roundtable discussion on Women's Health and Racial Disparities.



Interactive Roundtable
 Women's Health & Racial Disparities in Healthcare
OCTOBER 22, 2020
5:30-7 P.M.

Please join the National Association of Women Judges, Women Lawyer's Association of Michigan & WLAM Wayne for an interactive discussion regarding women's health and the racial disparities within the healthcare system.

A panel discussion, moderated by Zenell Brown, will be followed by Q&A and time for attendees to share their personal experiences.

Panelists include:

- Dr. Amy Cortis, Pediatric Emergency Medicine Physician in Detroit, Michigan
- Michelle Tisdani, General Counsel at Henry Ford Health System
- Emily Thomas, Plaintiff's Attorney practicing in birth trauma litigation
- Mary Placido, Nurse Practitioner at Beaumont Wayne

All panelists are speaking in their personal capacities

In November, Our Protect the Vote Committee hosted a virtual training session and is sharing key information via our social media.

wlam_wayne_votes
 11 Posts 29 Followers 48 Following

Protect the Vote WLAM-Wayne
 non-partisan election protection
docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfOeUf43KxEAwU...
 Followed by elle.bianchi, nikkirae06 and 13 others

NOW
 OCT. 19
 OCT. 20

YOU CAN VOTE NOW
 for the November 3 General Election.

MICHIGAN CAST YOUR VOTE
 DEPOSIT YOUR BALLOT

THE 5 LOVE LANGUAGES

KNOW YOUR VOTING RIGHTS
 MICHIGANVOTING.ORG

THE MICHIGAN SENATE
 passed SB 767 - allowing clerks to start counting absentee ballots early. This is great news!



Women Lawyers Association of Michigan Wayne Region Annual Report 2020-2021

In November, we partnered with Empty Bowls Project and WBA.

We made fleece blankets with the Fleece & Thank You program on November 14. This will be a project to put together blankets.

In the winter, we participated in Alternatives for Girls' Project Giving Tree for our Winter/Holiday Philanthropy.

On December 21 the WLAMom committee hosted a screening of Bad Moms. This was a relaxing and fun activity for our members.

We partnered with UDM Women's Law Caucus for a special screening of **"Period. End of Sentence"** on Friday 5, 2021. 100% of ticket sales were donated to the purchase of menstrual products for homeless and at-risk individuals throughout metro Detroit. Donations will benefit the Ruth Ellis Center, Cass Community Social Services, and Samaritas.

Donations went to:

- Ruth Ellis Center: <http://tiny.cc/RuthEllis>
- Cass Community Social Services: <http://tiny.cc/CassCC>
- Samaritas House, Heartline: <http://tiny.cc/Samaritas>

We had a **Galentines' Day Legal Libations** on February 12.



Throughout the month of February, we have been posting facts, people, and resources for **Black History Month**.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

LEWIS LATIMER

Lewis Latimer invented the carbon filament for the incandescent lightbulb. His invention was instrumental in the success of the lightbulb, which only lasted 14 hours in its previous form. Mr. Latimer also provided blueprints for the first telephone patent. He was a talented, self-taught, mechanical draftsman. He helped install electric plants in Philadelphia, New York, and Montreal.

Mr. Latimer served in the U.S. Navy and worked in a patent law firm early in his career. He eventually became chief draftsman and patent expert for Thomas Edison. In addition to his mechanical talents, Mr. Latimer was a poet and playwright. He was a founding member of the First Unitarian Church in Flushing, NY. Thomas Edison named Mr. Latimer one of 28 Edison Pioneers - the founding fathers of the electrical industry.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

♥ MOVIE NIGHT! BLACK LOVE ♥



Women Lawyers Association of Michigan Wayne Region Annual Report 2020-2021



Painting with a Twist / Fundraiser for Living Arts was January 29 @ 6:30 pm. A large portion of the proceeds went to Living Arts. Living Arts is a local organization with a mission to ignite creativity in the lives of Detroit youth through the performing, visual, and media arts. We raised \$400! See more here:

<https://www.livingartsdetroit.org/mission-vision-values>

April 17: Greening of Detroit

Several of our members participated in a volunteer opportunity with Greening of Detroit. Members planted trees!



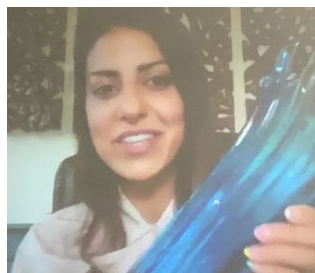
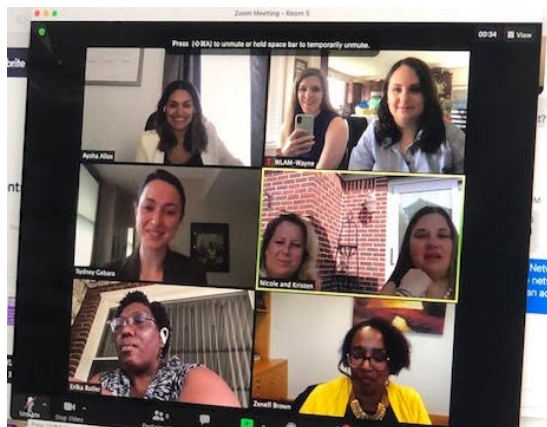


Women Lawyers Association of Michigan Wayne Region Annual Report 2020-2021

ANNUAL MEETING

We wrapped up the year with our Annual Meeting. The theme this year was “Her Voice, Her Vote.” We were honored to be joined by our Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson, President of the League of Women Voters Rhonda Craig, and Professor Mary-Elizabeth Murphy, and our wonderful moderator, Melanie Mcelroy.

We recognized our Member of the Year, Julia Walczak and this year’s recipient of the Hon. Kirsten Frank Kelly Award, Hon. Mariam Bazzi. Our new board was sworn in, and we are looking forward to the next year!





Women Lawyers Association of Michigan Western Region Annual Report 2020-2021

June 15, 2021

Submitted by Melissa Kelleigh, Regional Representative

I. "Looking for Recommendations...." Happy Hour

In October, we held a happy hour to share recommendations with each other on topics from the most productive technology systems to the best deals on suits to meal prepping systems to save time.

II. December 2020 Holiday Party

On December 16, the Western Region held a zoom holiday party to share memories and traditions for the magical time of year. Members shared drink recipes from cocktails to hot chocolate to share the holiday spirit.

III. Interrupting Implicit Bias Event

On January 27, 2021, WLAM Western Region held a very well-attended event on Interrupting Implicit Bias based on the research of Joan Williams. Our panelists Raquel Guzman, Tracey Brame, Kris Vanden Berg, and Judge Maureen Gottlieb discussed how to respond when faced with bias. We watched a series of videos by Joan Williams discussing the hurdles that women face in the workplace and had a lively discussion following each video. Those videos can be watched here: <https://leanin.org/education/introduction-to-what-works-for-women-at-work>





Women Lawyers Association of Michigan Western Region Annual Report 2020-2021

IV. Enneagram in the Workplace Event

In March, we held a workshop about the Enneagram with certified Enneagram coaches Meredith TerHaar and Joe Graham. The Enneagram is a personality typology model that is widely promoted in business management because of its unique ability to foster self-understanding and self-development. We discussed the personality typing system and how identifying your Enneagram “number” can benefit our workplaces, communication, team dynamics, and professional and personal relationships.

V. Outdoor Escape Room

In April, we held an in-person Outdoor Escape Room Adventure event where people could exercise body and mind to solve a mystery around downtown Grand Rapids.

VI. Regional Annual Meeting

In June, we held our regional Annual Meeting and Social in person to finally connect in person after a long year full of virtual meetings. Western Region board members were sworn in by our newest Michigan Supreme Court justice and WLAM Western Region member, Justice Elizabeth Welch. This event was scheduled to dovetail with the WLAM Annual Meeting beginning the following day.



VII. Annual Softball Charity Event

Due to COVID, our annual June judges versus lawyers softball event was cancelled in both 2020 and 2021. We hope that it will return in 2022 so that we can continue to support the YWCA West Central Michigan in their mission of eliminating racism and supporting women.