

**Committee on Women in the Law  
Member Manual  
2017-2018**

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## **I. OVERVIEW OF CWIL**

### **A. MISSION:**

Established in 1986, the Committee on Women in the Law is charged with the responsibility of identifying, studying and making recommendations to address gender bias and law-related issues affecting women. The Committee proposes legislation; the adoption and implementation of policy by the Executive Committee and House of Delegates of the New York State Bar Association; and other actions to ensure the fair treatment of women under law and the full participation of women in the administration of justice and as equal members of the legal community. The Committee is a standing committee of the Association as designated by the House of Delegates in 1989.

### **B. SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES:**

The Committee conducts studies and develops recommendations; comments on and proposes legislation; drafts model policies on women's issues; presents educational programs and publications; and coordinates its work with other Committees and Sections of the Association as well as other organizations addressing gender-related legal issues.

### **C. PROJECTS:**

In 2016-17, the Committee created the first NYSBA *Journal* devoted exclusively to women's rights and women in the profession. In 2014-15, the Committee also supported the Family and Medical Insurance Leave Act and supported Legislation for Equal Pay. The following illustrates recent projects of the Committee: submission of a Report and Recommendations: Information Memorandum in Support of S. 786 Family and Medical Insurance Leave Act (2015); prepared report on increasing Engagement of Women in New York State Bar Association (2014). In addition, in the 2014-2015 year, the Committee created a Woman's Trailblazer Exhibit and presented Trailblazer Awards to the three living Trailblazers honored in the Exhibit. For more information, please see the Committee on Women in the Law 2017-2018 Year Summary visit our website:

<https://www.nysba.org/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=73719>

### **D. PROGRAMS:**

The Committee on Women in the Law presents two keystone MCLE programs each year that feature topics of particular relevance to women attorneys. The Committee has presented educational forums on gender concerns; sexual harassment in the profession; balancing professional and family responsibilities; career development beyond partnerships; women in politics; seeking service on the bench; and breast cancer. Additionally, the Committee presents forums for women law students on career issues and opportunities.

#### **a. The Edith I. Spivack Symposium**

The Edith I. Spivack Symposium is a day-long MCLE program, which is held every January in New York City as part of the New York State Bar Association's Annual Meeting. The CWIL Annual Meeting Subcommittee is responsible for developing this program and recruiting speakers. The Symposium is accredited through the NYSBA Meetings Department.

**Date: Tuesday, January 23, 2018.**

**b. Women on the Move**

The Women on the Move Program is an MCLE seminar that typically alternates between a downstate and upstate location. The Women on the Move program – which alternates between an upstate and a Metropolitan New York City location - explores a wide array of topics of particular interest to women attorneys and typically includes a networking reception. The Women on the Move program is accredited through the NYSBA CLE Department.

**Save the Date: October 26, 2017, Larchmont Country Club, Westchester, NY. [Register here!](#)**

**<http://www.nysba.org/store/events/registration.aspx?event=0EW17>**

**c. Additional Programs and Events**

The CWIL Programming and Events Subcommittee is tasked with organizing smaller, non-MCLE programs that are held throughout the year. This includes networking events and other programs.

- i. PLEASE NOTE that if you are planning an event, it is important to allow sufficient time for marketing.** Design, printing, mailing, blast emails, etc. all require lead-time. For example, if you want to mail a brochure to market a program, it would typically take at least three weeks for the NYSBA Design Services, Print Shop and/or Graphics Department to complete the process. To avoid delays, please be sure to keep NYSBA staff in the loop at every stage of the planning process. **The Chair and/or Treasurer must approve all CWIL Program budgets and contracts before arrangements are finalized. Sponsorship and in-kind support is encouraged and greatly appreciated.**

**E. AWARDS:**

The Committee presents two awards during Annual Meeting week, scheduled for the week of **January 23 – 26, 2018.**

- a. The Ruth G. Schapiro Memorial Award** - To provide recognition for exemplary achievement by a female or a male member of the Association in addressing the concerns of women, an Association award was established in honor of the Committee's first Chair, Ruth G. Schapiro. The first recipient of this

award in 1992 was The Honorable Judith S. Kaye. This award is given out during the House of Delegates meeting during Annual Meeting week in New York City. **Date: Friday, January 26, 2018. (Application deadline: October 24, 2017; extended November 6, 2017)**

- b. **The Kay Crawford Murray Award** - To honor women in the profession who recognize the value of diversity in the legal profession and have dedicated their time to advancing the professional development of women attorneys, the Committee has established the Kay Crawford Murray Award. Future recipients will possess the following characteristics: a distinguished legal career or a rising star in the profession; an active member of bar associations for the purpose of advancing the professional and personal development of women attorneys; an active mentor to women attorneys. This award is given out during a luncheon following the Committee's CLE program during Annual Meeting week in New York City. **Date: Tuesday, January 23, 2018. (Application deadline: October 24, 2017, extended November 6, 2017)**

#### **F. STATE BAR ASSOCIATION RESOURCE:**

Working with other Committees and Sections, the Committee is a resource to facilitate active involvement of women in the NYSBA. The Committee issues reports on participation levels of women in Association activities to assist Association, Section and Committee leaders in advancing opportunities for involvement of women.

## **II. YOUR ROLE**

CWIL members represent various parts of the state and country and many practice areas and settings.

### **A. Membership Requirements**

Over the years, the ongoing commitment of our members has been essential to the success of CWIL programming and the advancement of our mission. We recognize that you face substantial demands on your time, but your dedication is necessary for CWIL to progress and advance its mission.

The following activities are mandatory requirements for membership with CWIL:

- 1) attend at least one of the CWIL events;
- 2) join one subcommittee; and
- 3) attend monthly CWIL meetings. Please let Secretary know if you are unable to attend a meeting due to a work commitment to be marked "Excused."

### **B. Subcommittee Participation**

There are several ways to be actively engaged in the work of a subcommittee even if you have limited time. These include, but are not limited to:

- arranging for sponsorship from your firm, company, or organization for one of CWIL’s programs (please let us share with you all the ways we can recognize your firm);
- asking your firm, company, or organization to host a CWIL meeting in a conference room or space in your office;
- identifying and obtaining a speaker or speakers for one of CWIL’s programs;
- writing or reviewing an article about a CWIL event to appear on our webpage, the *State Bar News and Journal*; and/or
- taking photographs at a CWIL event.
- “Liking” and “Sharing” our messages, event announcements on social media

**C. LinkedIn, Listserv and CWIL Website**

Information about the activities of CWIL is distributed through several mediums including LinkedIn, Listserv, the Committee’s website, the online NYSBA Community of Women, and the Women’s Community e-newsletter, published two times a year. The information you receive will include notices regarding upcoming events, articles of interest about news that impacts women and women attorneys, reminders for upcoming Committee meetings, as well as job opportunities, when available.

**We encourage the committee to network and support each other in your practices and professionally.**

**D. State Bar Requirements**

Under the State Bar’s Bylaws, CWIL may consider your position vacant if you have not participated in the three activities described above. In that case, the co-chairs may declare your position vacant and ask the President of the State Bar to fill your position with another appointment at the end of the bar year.

**III. IMPORTANT DATES**

1. *September 25, 2017*: CWIL Meeting and Kick-off Reception –Manhattan, NY
2. *October 26, 2017*: Women on the Move Program –Larchmont, NY
3. *January 23, 2018*: Annual Meeting Program and CWIL Meeting – Manhattan, NY
4. *June 12, 2018*: Final CWIL Meeting –Manhattan, NY

**IV. BUDGET**

The Committee’s budget runs from January 1st to December 31st. As a committee of the State Bar, we obtain our funding from the State Bar.

**A. The Budget Process**

Each year in June we begin our budget review process to determine how much money we will need to request for the following bar year. The subcommittee chairs are asked to provide budget numbers. Based on that information and the actual expenses of the Committee from that year, the Committee's Treasurer will draft a budget for review and approval by the co-chairs. The final budget is submitted to the State Bar in July by our NYSBA staff liaison. Our liaison participates in the overall State Bar budget meeting advocating for fully funding our budget. The budget is approved in November.

### **B. Funding Beyond Our Budget**

For the Annual Meeting and Women on the Move subcommittees, the chairs may find they need additional money to fund the programs. The Committee may raise money to supplement our budget for these programs. The State Bar does impose some restriction on whom the Committee may solicit for funds. The NYSBA liaison will work with the co-chairs to determine from which sources we can solicit.

### **V. COMMITTEE CONTACTS (For full roster, please refer to CWIL Directory)**

**Chair:** **Susan L. Harper, Esq.**  
**Bates Group LLC**  
Phone: (917) 325-8652  
Email: SharperNY@aol.com (preferred email for all CWIL communications)

**Co-Treasurer:** **Lisa Schoenfeld**  
Phone: 516-877-8000  
lschoenfeld@soklaw.com)

**Co-Treasurer:** **Maureen Bezuhly**  
Phone: 917-316-5954  
Email: mbezuhly@nyc.rr.com

**Secretary:** **Christina H. Singh-Bedell**  
Email: [christinasingh@gmail.com](mailto:christinasingh@gmail.com)  
Phone: (516) 571-4913

**NYSBA**  
**Staff Liaison:** **Kathy Baxter**  
Phone: (518) 487-5624  
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Thank you!