

The Bar Around the Corner: Brooklyn Women's Bar Association

Association Address: 123 Remsen Street, Brooklyn, N.Y., 11201

Website: brooklynwomensbar.org

Phone: 347-790-0030

Founded: April 11, 1918

Number of members: 450

President: Michele S. Mirman

Association vision

In the almost 100 years the Brooklyn Women's Bar Association has existed, we have dedicated ourselves to counseling women, learning together and working for legislation that protects and promotes the interests of all women.

We present continuing legal education that dissects bias and discrimination in every form that touches us—religious, cultural, racial, economic, age and gender-based. We look to increase our young membership, because we know that with each new young member, we become more in touch with the world as it is and will be.

We envision learning to run offices, ask for raises and benefits, invest money, be in charge and lead, so that we finally overcome the wage inequality between men and women.

Brief history

In 1910, Jeanette Goodman Brill, Brooklyn Law School (BLS) class of 1908, along with several other BLS women grads, banded together to create the Brooklyn Law School Women's Alumnae Club. It was the first of its kind in the nation, and Brill was the first president.

On April 11, 1918, six months after women were granted the right to vote in New York State, Brill, along with her BLS classmate Amy Wren and seven other BLS graduates, founded the Brooklyn Women's Bar Association. Their creed—and ours to this day—was education, support and legislation. They dedicated themselves to supporting women, legal education for women and legislation that promoted women's rights.

Since its founding, the BWBA has provided a professional network and support system for women attorneys, afforded legal education programs to our members and all lawyers and engaged in efforts helpful to the broader community.

The BWBA is a proud chapter of the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York (WBASNY). Through its affiliation with WBASNY, the Association has played a key role in shaping many local and national laws affecting women and, by participating in WBASNY's International Law Committee, the BWBA has expanded its influence in global matters involving women's rights.

The BWBA routinely participates in the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk to raise funds for the American Cancer Society. We conduct an October Courthouse Alert to increase public awareness about breast cancer.

The BWBA organizes a Fall clothing drive, in conjunction with The Relief Boutique, to benefit economically disadvantaged women returning to the workforce.

At our year-end holiday party, we donate toys for the children of women living at a local domestic violence shelter and raise funds to benefit the women at that shelter.

The vision of our founders in 1918 inspires our organization, one dedicated to equality, diversity, fairness and opportunity for women lawyers and for all women.

Most popular outing/social event

Our most popular event is our year-end annual dinner held at one of the pre-eminent venues in Brooklyn, in the past the Brooklyn Botanic Garden or the Liberty Warehouse. More than 200 attorneys and jurists attend each year to mingle and enjoy the beautiful scenery and gourmet food. It is here that we announce our Beatrice M. Judge Recognition Award and our Sybil Hart Cooper Award.



Goal for next month? Next year?

New York state pays women 87 cents for every \$1 a man earns, and it is our goal to eradicate that inequality.

Most important project/initiative?

Our centennial is April 11, 2018, and we intend to make it one big celebration, commemorating our founders and our history and recommitting ourselves to our goals.

With no budget limit, what project or initiative would you take on?

We would start a Brooklyn Women's Bar Association "Center of Excellence for Women's Legal Issues," with a think-tank, mentorships, scholarships, training, support and education, all geared toward helping women obtain wage and employment equality in New York State and throughout the nation.

How have members helped improve the Association?

Our membership has continually re-invigorated us with diversity, new ideas, different ways of thinking, and the energy to create novel programming. ♦

The Bar Around the Corner is a project of the Committee for Bar Leaders of New York State.