Firm Wins NAWL President’s Award

On August 10, 2002, Jenner & Block became the first Chicago-based law firm to win the National Association of Women Lawyers President's Award. NAWL is a not-for-profit professional association that promotes the advancement and welfare of women in the legal profession and works to eliminate discrimination against women in society.

The group’s President's Award honors Jenner & Block’s commitment to and long-time support of women in the field of law. Partner Stephanie Scharf, Co-Chair of the Firm’s Products Liability and Mass Tort Defense Practice, accepted the Award on behalf of the Firm at the NAWL annual meeting, held in Washington, D.C., in conjunction with the American Bar Association annual meeting.

“Jenner & Block’s commitment to women in the legal profession and the community is deeply rooted in our culture and traditions,” she said in accepting the award, noting that women lawyers at the Firm lead several key client relationships and practice groups, serve at all levels of Firm management, and provide pro bono representation to many organizations on issues that affect women. Earlier in the year, at the ABA’s Midyear Meeting held in Philadelphia, NAWL presented Stephanie with its Outstanding Member Award, honoring her on the basis of her personal and professional achievement.

Also at the annual Installation and Awards Luncheon in Washington, NAWL presented its Arabella Babb Mansfield Award to U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

Women Play Important Roles In Insurance Coverage Practice, ABA Committee

Several women attorneys from Jenner & Block were involved in the historic 15th annual meeting of the ABA’s Insurance Coverage Litigation Committee, held in Tucson in March.

One of the largest Committees in the Section of Litigation, with an active and dynamic membership of insurance coverage lawyers from around the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom, the ICLC is chaired by Firm Partner Lorelie Masters.

At the meeting, Partner Charlotte Wager moderated the “Lloyd’s of London & European Update” panel, in which Partner David Greenwald participated, and Associate Traci Braun was a presenter on the “Insurance Coverage 101” panel.

At a dinner on March 7 celebrating the Committee’s success, Lorie Masters and her Co-Chair Walter Andrews of Shaw Pittman in McLean, Virginia, recognized the founders and past chairs of the Committee and the past Chairs of the ICLC’s annual CLE Meeting. Scott Atlas, Chair of the Section of Litigation and Patricia Refo, Chair-Elect of the Section, recognized the success of the Committee and spoke about the role of the ABA in today’s world.

Jenner & Block’s ties to the ICLC are extensive: John H. Mathias Jr., Chair of the Firm’s Insurance Litigation and Counseling Practice, is a founder and former Chair of the Committee, and Lorie serves as the current policyholder side Chair. To promote collegiality in what was once a very adversarial practice area, all subcommittees and programs for the Committee are chaired by a lawyer from
Women Lead Firm’s Products Liability and Mass Tort Defense Practice

Women lawyers play a significant role in the Firm’s thriving Products Liability and Mass Tort Defense Practice, working for a variety of Fortune 500 clients including Dow Chemical, Exelon, Pfizer and Sara Lee.

Stephanie Scharf and Lise Spacapan, along with Matthew Neumeier, serve as the Co-Chairs who lead the practice at Jenner & Block. Other women partners in the Firm with substantial products liability or mass tort experience are Jennifer Burke, Lynn Grayson, Jodie Kelley, Sarah Marmor, Deanne Maynard, Rebecca Raftery, Gabrielle Sigel and Charlotte Wager.

The 10 women partners and nine women associates in the practice group – part of a firmwide practice that counts over 40 lawyers – have become especially skilled in highly technical areas involving the energy, food, chemical and pharmaceutical industries. They work on matters including advanced chemistry, pharmacology, epidemiology, toxicology and medicine. Several of the attorneys have advanced or undergraduate degrees in fields including chemistry, biology, veterinary medicine, psychology and behavioral sciences.

In so many cases, the technical and scientific evidence becomes key to resolving the dispute, so we are always working towards developing a strong, scientific defense that is readily explained to a judge and jury,” said Stephanie Scharf, who has a Ph.D. in behavioral sciences/psychology as well as a J.D. from the University of Chicago. “Many of our women lawyers have shown that they can ‘translate’ complex concepts into straightforward language to make the case for their client”.

A significant amount of effort has been devoted to the defense of pharmaceutical product liability cases, staffed by associates such as Traci Braun, Heather Kramer and Christina Weis, as well as Marilyn Chimes, who worked as a veterinarian for many years in both private practice and biomedical research, including in the pharmaceutical industry, prior to becoming an attorney.

For example, the Firm represents Dow Chemical in defending claims that certain children’s vaccines, including the polio vaccine administered in the 1950s, have contributed to medical conditions developing in people today, said Lise Spacapan.

“Cases like these have led our women lawyers to understand and explain often-complex corporate histories as well as scientific issues,” Lise said.

The Firm also handles a variety of product liability matters for Pfizer. Stephanie, Lise and several women associates are currently defending personal injury lawsuits and consumer fraud claims filed in a number of federal and state courts involving a medicine used to treat diabetes. For a silicone breast implant defendant, Lise and Partner Sarah Marmor were key members of the national trial team and also successfully worked to defeat a breast implant class action lawsuit.

Women Entrepreneurs’ Teamwork Leads to Success

When the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development privatized the management and marketing of single-family homes, Nancy Richards and her business partner, Lisa Barrentine, spotted an opportunity.

Nancy was president of Texas-based First Preston Management, a well-established but small real estate management business. She and Lisa decided to forge a team of women and minority-owned small businesses to collectively provide the resources and abilities necessary to compete for and win the HUD contracts.

Their strategy included forming a joint venture with a Native American appraiser whose company was designated a small disadvantaged business by the Small Business Administration (“SBA”). That business, and a joint venture to which it belonged, received a preference in the bidding process. However, the SBA had to approve designation of the joint venture - but had never given such approval.

First Preston met Jenner & Block Partner Les Lepow in Washington, D.C. An authority regarding the often arcane world of the SBA’s rules and regulations, Les devised the winning strategy securing SBA approval.

First Preston and its joint venture together now operate in over 22 states. Furthermore, they use the benefits of their success to give back to women and minority-owned business and to those in need, through Habitat for Humanity and the Dallas Women’s Foundation.

Jenner and Block continues to be a proud partner and supporter of First Preston, and to work with it to build on its success as it confronts new issues and looks to new opportunities.
Firm Creates Women’s Forum

To honor, support and advance the careers of its women attorneys, Jenner & Block has created the Women’s Forum, and appointed Partner Susan Levy — a member of the Firm’s Management Committee — as its Chair.

The new initiative is designed to foster opportunities for professional, social and personal growth for all of the women attorneys, to communicate the Firm’s strong commitment to their success and to enhance the visibility and recognition of Jenner & Block’s leadership in support of women in the legal profession.

Susan convened the first meeting of the Women’s Forum in early March, and announced that the group will strive to do the following:

1) Work to provide meaningful opportunities for interaction between women attorneys;
2) Advance marketing opportunities for Jenner & Block women attorneys, including promoting, coordinating and supporting participation and leadership in professional and charitable organizations;
3) Promote the professional achievements and successes of our women attorneys; and
4) Provide events for women attorneys and summer associates to help them succeed and advance their careers.

“Our goal is for the Women’s Forum to be a systematic and organized effort for the women attorneys to communicate with and assist each other in their professional and personal lives,” Susan said. “We will continue to hold regular women’s lunch meetings as well as programs of special interest to women, especially those focused on women corporate counsel.”

The Women’s Forum builds on the legacy of support for and advancement of women attorneys begun by Jenner & Block and its pioneering partner Joan Hall (see Winter 2002 edition of Women in Focus and story at right).

In the 1970s, Joan began the practice of bringing together the women attorneys of the Firm through regular lunch meetings featuring in-house and outside speakers on a variety of professional, business development, and work/life balance issues. The lunch meetings, a standard at the Firm since that time, have featured women alums — including federal and state court judges, professors, general counsel, and business leaders — as well as women outside counsel, business and community leaders.

Women Play Important Roles in Insurance Coverage Practice, ABA Committee

Women play important roles in insurance coverage practice, particularly as it relates to insurance companies, other entities and the general public. Informed by experience and dedicated to the profession, these women have made invaluable contributions to the insurance industry.

The ABA Committee on Insurance Litigation/Committee/Insurance was created a task force to help address the issues of making and handling the insurance claims related to September 11. Written for the general public, these remain posted on the ABA Committee's website at www.abanet.org/litigation/committee/insurance.

The Task Force also was charged with fostering a cooperative approach to resolving these insurance claims and to provide resources for policymakers, policyholders, insurance companies, and others concerning these issues. To fulfill these objectives, the Task Force created a property and business interruption insurance checklist and related documents about submitting and handling insurance claims related to September 11. Written for the general public, these remain posted on the Committee's website at www.abanet.org/litigation/committee/insurance.

Lorie has written and lectured extensively on issues related to insurance coverage and litigation. Among many other works, she is co-author of the treatise, Insurance Coverage Litigation, now in its second edition.

Debbie has been named to the ABA's State's Top Young Attorneys list. Among her many achievements, Debbie was cited for her defamation and First Amendment work with Paramount Pictures and CBS Broadcasting. Debbie serves as Co-Chair of the Firm's Trade Secrets and Unfair Competition Practice and is a member of the Intellectual Property, Media and First Amendment, and Tax Controversy Practices, among others. “Berman has shone in cases involving complicated tax accounting issues, Title VII race discrimination and unfair competition,” the profile stated. It also noted her extensive community service and pro bono legal work including political asylum and parental rights cases.

"Many people dream of making it big in movies or television. Debbie Berman doesn’t have to dream; she’s already done it," began the 2002 Law Bulletin, describing her recent work on parental rights cases.

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"Debbie is one of the most dedicated advocates I have ever known," one of her nominators said.

"She is ferocious and completely determined to win within the system. Give me 10 Debbies and I could conquer the world!"

Awards Corner

Joan Hall Named “Woman with Vision”

Retired Firm Partner Joan M. Hall received a prestigious “Women With Vision” award from the Women’s Bar Association of Illinois in November. The award is given to those who have demonstrated visionary approaches in their careers and especially contributed to the empowerment of women.

Managing Partner Robert L. Graham presented the coveted award to Joan at the association’s 61st Annual Joint Professional Dinner, held at the Union League Club in downtown Chicago (pictured above).

“I admire Joan not only for her extraordinary career, but for her continuous efforts to nurture, help, push and support the advancement of women and women lawyers,” he said.

During her heralded 34-year career as a trial lawyer, Joan worked tirelessly to advance the progress of women. Among her professional successes, she was the first woman to chair the Litigation Section of the American Bar Association, the first woman appointed to Jenner & Block’s Executive Committee, and the first woman in Illinois elected as a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers.

Berman Honored as One of State’s Top Young Attorneys

Debbie Berman, in honoring her as one of 40 Illinois Attorneys Under 40 to Watch. Among her many achievements, Debbie was cited for her defamation and First Amendment work with Paramount Pictures and CBS Broadcasting.

"Debbie serves as Co-Chair of the Firm’s Trade Secrets and Unfair Competition Practice and is a member of the Intellectual Property, Media and First Amendment, and Tax Controversy Practices, among others. "Berman has shone in cases involving complicated tax accounting issues, Title VII race discrimination and unfair competition," the profile stated. It also noted her extensive community service and pro bono legal work including political asylum and parental rights cases.

"Debbie is one of the most dedicated advocates I have ever known," one of her nominators said.

"She is ferocious and completely determined to win within the system. Give me 10 Debbies and I could conquer the world!"
Combating the Trafficking of Women and Girls

Held in debt bondage, stripped of their passports, and forced to provide sexual services to clients, thousands of women and girls struggle to survive, trapped in brothels dotting the landscape in post-conflict areas including Bosnia and Herzegovina. The women, many seeking better lives and legal employment in Western Europe, instead find themselves trafficked into forced prostitution in the Balkans. Traffickers offering lucrative jobs and bogus contracts trick the women — most from Moldova, Ukraine, and Romania, and some of them as young as 13 — and then sell them to brothel owners for prices ranging between $700 and $2,300. Once purchased, the trafficking victims have little hope of escape.

New Jenner & Block Associate Martina Vandenberg authored an important report, published by Human Rights Watch in November 2002, that documented widespread corruption and official complicity that allow the buying and selling of women and girls to flourish. Local police officers facilitate trafficking as part owners of brothels and bars holding trafficked women, as guards and employees in those establishments, and as “gratis” clients of the brothels in exchange for tips-offs and fake documents, according to the report. The police officers, like the traffickers themselves, enjoy almost complete impunity.

Human Rights Watch’s three-year investigation, spearheaded by Martina, also found evidence of involvement by members of the international community. Peacekeepers, military contractors and international police officers, deployed to Bosnia and Herzegovina to promote the rule of law, instead engaged in trafficking-related crimes. A Russian Stabilization Force (SFOR) soldier trafficked two Ukrainian women into Bosnia and Herzegovina, selling them to the owner of a nightclub. Contractors employed by the U.S. contingent to SFOR purchased women and girls and their passports from the owner of a local brothel dubbed “Harley Davidson.” In three cases, international police officers serving with the U.N. mission purchased women. In addition, international police officers visited the brothels as clients, sending a strong message to trafficking victims that they could not turn to the U.N. police force for assistance. Immunity provided under the Dayton Agreement and a gap in U.S. jurisdiction allowed U.S. citizens implicated in these offenses to return home without fear of prosecution.

After publishing the report, Vandenberg and Human Rights Watch Executive Director Ken Roth met with the U.N. Under-Secretary General for Peacekeeping Operations in New York. “They conceded almost all of our findings,” said Vandenberg. “We hope that the United Nations will learn from its failure to combat trafficking Bosnia and Herzegovina and apply those lessons to all peacekeeping missions in the future.”

Mother and Daughter Win Asylum, Scholarship, Joy

A young woman from rural Kosovo who until four years ago had never used a computer or even a telephone is poised to graduate college at the top of her class this spring, thanks to the unwavering tenacity of her mother, her own academic dedication, and the help of three Firm attorneys.

Lola, then 17, and her mother File (pronounced “FEE-lay”) are ethnic Albanians who in early 1998 fled rural Kosovo, a province in the southern part of the former Yugoslavia, for Albania, after Serbs repeatedly attacked and beat File, killed several of their neighbors and burned everything in their home. They later learned that File’s husband, a farmer and political activist who remained behind in Kosovo, was executed by Serbian authorities.

They reached Albania with just the clothes on their backs — and in Lola’s case, some treasured novels. In Kosovo, Lola had attended a one-room school and, a diligent student, received extra tutoring at home. File sold produce at a roadside stand, and within a year had saved enough to send Lola to school in Albania and eventually buy their passage to America. Arriving in Chicago within days of NATO bombing in Kosovo, File knew no one in the United States, and did not speak the language. Lola, however, had learned German, French, Italian, and English through her tutoring. Like most undocumented immigrants, the mother and daughter were separated by INS authorities and placed in detention; nonetheless, File managed to meet another Albanian woman in jail and eventually found an Albanian émigré to sponsor them.

Through the Midwest Immigrant and Human Rights Center, Partner Lawrence
Clients Gain Freedom After Harrowing Journey

Three political activists targeted for persecution following Congo’s civil war were granted asylum recently, thanks to the work of Associates Megan Fahey and Suzanne Johnson.

The pro bono clients, including a woman who managed to survive weeks in the jungle while pregnant, had fled to America to escape political, social and ethnic persecution from their government. The three — Ruth and her husband Jean Louis, both college-educated and the parents of five children, along with Ruth’s younger sister Laeticia, a mother of two — found their way to the Midwest Immigrant and Human Rights Center, who referred the case to Jenner & Block.

Their journey began in 1997, when the divide between the northern and southern ethnic groups in the Republic of Congo-Brazzaville led to civil war. Sassou Nguesso’s militia eventually gained control of the country and although the war had ended, the violence continued. Because they were prominent political activists opposing the current government — Jean Louis, Ruth and Laeticia were active in the Union Panafrikan for Social Democracy — and also members of the disfavored Nibolek ethnic group, they and their relatives were targeted for violent attack.

Ruth and Laeticia’s parents were captured and killed by Nguesso’s Cobra militia. Jean Louis’ mother and uncle also were murdered. When Ruth and Jean Louis heard on the radio that Sassou Nguesso had been ousted, they decided to flee to South Africa, but Laeticia had to escape alone. She survived on leaves and dirty swamp water and gave birth to her first child while hiding in the jungle.

Upon reviewing the application, the Immigration Court judge encouraged the INS not to contest it, and the two women were granted political asylum.

With the help of Jennifer and Partner Carla Rozycki, Lola received a full four-year scholarship to the University of Illinois at Chicago. She and File have been living off the school grant, supplemented by income File earns by cleaning at a church and in homes. This spring, Lola will graduate with a degree in finance; she already has applied to graduate school and investment banking firms, where she hopes to use her language skills to work in international finance.

"I was struck by Lola’s maturity and intelligence from the beginning," Jennifer said recently. "She has a real joy for life, which is remarkable given what she’s gone through. And File is a survivor, in every sense of the word."

"Getting to know them has been one of the most meaningful experiences of my career," Timothy Burns, who supervised the associates on the case, “so this was certainly a very significant victory.”

She survived on leaves and dirty swamp water and gave birth to her first child while hiding in the jungle.

On July 12, 2002, the office granted asylum to their three clients. Each of their clients, assisted by summer associate Erinn Lindstrom, filed the affirmative asylum applications with supporting affidavits and also handled the 3-hour INS interviews for each of their clients, assisted by summer associate Erinn Lindstrom. On July 12, 2002, the office granted asylum to their three clients.

The asylum process requires the applicant to attend an interview with an Immigration and Naturalization Service officer, after which the officer either grants asylum or the case is sent to the immigration court. Megan and Suzanne filed the affirmative asylum applications with supporting affidavits and also handled the 3-hour INS interviews for each of their clients, assisted by summer associate Erinn Lindstrom. On July 12, 2002, the office granted asylum to their three clients.

"The Chicago asylum office approves at the interview stage less than a quarter of the affirmative asylum applications filed," said Partner Timothy Burns, who supervised the associates on the case, "so this was a very significant victory.”

The clients’ children remain at the Sisters of Mary Center in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Laeticia, Ruth and Jean Louis are working to bring their children to the United States.
Imagine this: You are CEO of a Fortune 500 company, and you have a serious legal dispute—a “bet the company” case. You go to your trusted General Counsel (and, hopefully, your trusted outside counsel) for advice: should we sue? Your counsel tells you what your chances are: you must bring your case in a justice system where you’ll have a lawyer appointed to represent you; she has never handled a case this big—but don’t worry, she has lots of experience with eviction cases in housing court; your opponent will be allowed to use 10 times the resources you may use; litigants like you

I was looking for a pro bono criminal case when my first death penalty case found me.

-Terri Mascherin

who are non-whites have the most severe verdicts entered against them at a much higher rate than happens to white litigants; and the trial court verdicts are so unreliable that they are reversed 50% of the time. But don’t worry too much about that, because there’s a 20-year post-judgment appeals process that you can use to try to get the justice that eludes you in the trial court.

Sounds far-fetched? Difficult to believe? Perhaps Kafkaesque? Surely you, as a responsible executive, wouldn’t risk trusting your company’s future to such a capricious system.

Yet these are infirmities that a blue-ribbon commission appointed by former Illinois Governor George Ryan found characterize the justice system by which the State of Illinois administers the death penalty. When he granted clemency to all of the prisoners on Illinois’ death row in January 2003, Governor Ryan decided he wasn’t willing to bear responsibility for the risk that the system had reached a fatally wrong decision in any of those cases.

I have devoted a significant part of my practice over the almost 19 years that I’ve been an attorney representing death row inmates in Illinois post-conviction proceedings, searching for that justice that seems to have been so elusive in capital trials.

These are not easy cases—the client has no resources, the legal issues are complex, the facts of the offenses charged are sometimes awful, and the emotional toll that a capital case takes on all involved, including the lawyers—is greater than anything I’ve experienced in any other aspect of my practice. But the feeling of professional and personal satisfaction a lawyer can experience when she helps someone who is at risk of losing his life get justice is overwhelming.

I didn’t start out intending to do death penalty work—I was looking for a pro bono criminal case when my first death penalty case found me.

I believe strongly that every attorney has a professional obligation to help those who can’t afford to hire a lawyer. I believe it is a privilege to be admitted to the Bar, and with that privilege comes an obligation to help those who cannot navigate the justice system on their own. I cannot think of a group of people more in need of our help than those whom society has selected as unworthy to live.

Whatever one’s view on the morality of the death penalty, I believe it cannot be seriously disputed that before society may exact that penalty, we must be sure that justice has been done.

My personal journey through nearly two decades of death penalty work has been sometimes devastating, sometimes exhilarating, and often frustrating, but I believe it has made me a better lawyer—more resilient, resourceful, tenacious and insightful. And, when it is all over, whatever the rest of my professional life may bring, I will be able to say that I have done some good for someone who was in dire need of help.

(Terri Mascherin has successfully represented two Illinois death row inmates, and is now one of the lead counsel representing inmates in actions in which the Illinois Attorney General and various State’s Attorneys are challenging Governor Ryan’s clemency orders. In October, she was awarded the 2002 Outstanding Legal Service Award by the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty.)

Firm Sponsors Benefit for Anti-Death Penalty Coalition

Jenner & Block hosted a special reception in Chicago following the February 13 performance of the Broadway play “The Exonerated” to benefit the Illinois Coalition Against The Death Penalty. Attending the performance and reception were several former Illinois death row inmates including Gary Gauger, whose story is depicted in the play. Actor Brian Dennehy, who portrays Mr. Gauger, also attended the reception. Partner Terri Mascherin led Jenner & Block’s sponsorship efforts for this event. Pictured from left to right are: Jane Bohman, Executive Director of the Illinois Coalition Against The Death Penalty; Gary Gauger; Brian Dennehy; and Terri Mascherin.
Meet Our Newest Women Partners

Jenner & Block has added five women partners since the 2002 edition of Equal Time — Women In Focus.

Two women associates — Jennifer Burke and Tanya Stanish — were promoted to Partner on January 1.

Jennifer Burke, a member of the Firm's Environmental, Energy and Natural Resources Law Practice, focuses her practice on environmental law in litigation, regulatory and transactional matters.

Tanya Stanish is a member of the Firm's Litigation and Family Law Practices, with a concentration in matrimonial law.

Three other women lawyers joined the Firm as lateral partners:

Catherine Abbott joins the Firm's Corporate Practice and brings to the Firm her extensive experience in securities offerings, mergers, acquisitions, divestitures, spin-offs, complex corporate reorganizations, leveraged acquisitions and private equity and venture capital investments.

Sarah Marmor joined the Firm's Litigation and Products Liability and Mass Tort Defense Practices. Sarah has significant experience defending clients in breast implant, tobacco and asbestos litigation, and also has represented a broad range of clients in employment counseling and litigation, commercial contract disputes and insurance coverage litigation.

Teri Lindquist returned to Jenner & Block's Corporate Practice and is co-chair of the Finance Practice. Teri's practice focuses primarily on debt financing transactions for private equity groups, commercial lending institutions and various private and public companies as well as debt restructurings and workouts.

Listrom Addresses SuperConference

For the second year in a row, Partner Linda Listrom is serving on the Advisory Panel for, and speaking at, the Corporate Legal Times SuperConference, held in Chicago. The SuperConference brings the General Counsel of the country's biggest companies to Chicago for two days of networking and skills development. Now in its third year, the SuperConference has quickly become one of the most anticipated events in the General Counsel community. Linda also serves on Jenner & Block's Policy Committee.

Women Summer Associates Hail from Varied Backgrounds

This summer, Jenner & Block will welcome 30 women summer associates from over a dozen U.S. law schools. "The diversity of backgrounds is extraordinary," says Charlotte L. Wager, who co-chairs the Chicago 2003 summer program. "Our recruitment efforts at a wide range of law schools last fall really paid off, and we've attracted students with excellent academic credentials plus some unique backgrounds and experiences."

Among this year's summer associates are a semi-professional soccer player, a former restaurant manager from Hanoi, Vietnam, and a Formula One racing enthusiast. Women summer associates have worked for: a Member of Parliament in London; the Forum for Women, Law and Development in Kathmandu, Nepal; Oceana, Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to protection of the world's oceans; Hands On Atlanta, a group that delivers meals to people with AIDS; Kings County District Attorney's Office, Homocide Bureau; Iowa Senator Tom Harkin; Wisconsin Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin; Michigan State Representative Bob Brown; the Department of Justice, Criminal Appellate Division; and the White House, as an intern for a former Deputy Counsel to the President and assisting Charles F.C. Ruff.

Some other interesting backgrounds include a blue belt in Myo Sim Karate, a champion beach volleyball player and a member of the Orchestra at Temple Square in Salt Lake City who participated in Cultural Olympiad during the 2002 Olympic Winter Games.

"Participating in the summer program will give these students a great opportunity to experience life as an associate at Jenner & Block. They will work on research assignments, draft documents and meet clients," Charlotte noted.

The summer program includes a training program, social events and an opportunity to volunteer for community projects and work on pro bono cases.
Single Mother’s Job Saved

Partner Gail Morse recently helped save the job of a single mom. The job was jeopardized by an arrest warrant that remained outstanding and undiscovered for more than 10 years. When younger, the woman’s drug habit lead to several related arrests. For one of those arrests, she failed to appear in court, and a bench warrant was issued without her knowledge. After the woman served time in jail for a subsequent arrest for shoplifting, she sought help from The Women’s Treatment Center in Chicago to get sober. After successfully completing both the residential and outpatient programs at TWTC, the woman has been chemical-free for over 10 years, works full time and is raising a child.

Recently the woman interviewed for a new job. The forgotten but still outstanding warrant was discovered by her prospective new employer. Not only did that warrant keep her from changing jobs, but it also jeopardized her current job. When she sought to rectify the case on her own, a judge ordered her to return to court with legal counsel. The woman found Gail, who serves on the board of TWTC. Gail was able to work with the State’s Attorney to resolve the case in favor of her client, who has just earned her Associate degree and is continuing education to be a counselor — to help others break their chemical dependencies.

Attorneys Serve “Women of the World”

For the third year, partner Lynn Grayson led more than a dozen of the Firm’s women attorneys and summer associates in service day activities last spring, including landscaping, gardening, cleaning and painting at two transitional living facilities for Chicago-area women and children operated by Women In Need Growing Stronger (WINGS).

Jenner & Block volunteer teams worked as part of the Third Annual “Women Everywhere: Partners in Service Project,” the collaborative effort of 10 women’s bar organizations and committees that enlists attorneys to volunteer at nearly 30 metro-area service agencies serving women and children in need. Last year’s theme was “Women of the World.”

Pictured above, Associates Jennifer Salvatore (left) and Keri Hotaling prepare to plant a tree in the yard of one of the safehouses. This year, Keri serves on the Women Everywhere Planning Committee. Associate Angela LaPratta recently completed training with, and now serves as a counselor at, Family Shelter Services, which provides counseling and shelter to victims of domestic abuse (primarily women and children). To complement this work in a legal capacity, Angela recently became a volunteer attorney on call for Pro Bono Advocates, which provides free legal assistance to Chicago-area victims of domestic abuse and represents them at Order of Protection hearings.

Associates Kali Bracey and Robin Meriweather serve as mentors for female students at the Thurgood Marshall Academy Public Charter High School in Washington, D.C. Kali first became involved in fundraising for the school and then began recruiting and training potential mentors before becoming one herself. Mentors serve as sounding boards and cheerleaders for the students, by listening to their problems, praising their successes, and encouraging their academic pursuits — as well as seeing movies and going to restaurants.