



TEXAS WOMEN LAWYERS

3267 Bee Caves Rd
Suite 107
Box 208
Austin, Texas 78746

March 28, 2008 – Press Release

Texas Women Lawyers' 2008 Maternity Leave Report Published Highlight at Recent CLE

Texas Women Lawyers is a non-profit group dedicated to providing women lawyers with recognized CLE, networking and referral opportunities.

TWL's recent, acclaimed CLE program, "***Excellence in Law, Excellence in Life!***," captured themes about the impact of women lawyers in diverse facets of work and community service. As part of that program, TWL issued its long-awaited report on maternity leave policies at Texas law firms. The project was led by **Jeanne ("Cezy") Collins**, past TWL President and Partner with Kemp Smith LLP in El Paso (915-533-4424). The work was partially underwritten by the Texas Bar Foundation,^a and the report (copy attached) was finalized by law professors **Jennifer Horn** and **Rosemary Dillon**, of **Texas Tech Law School**. TWL is grateful for their generous and thoughtful written work and captivating PowerPoint presentation at the CLE.

The report comments about the "maternal wall" that women face in law, and finds that, while leave policies have improved (and Texas is doing somewhat better than the national average), there is still much work needed. Professors Horn and Dillon considered retention and attrition issues, the biases held against both women and men who are parents, and looked for solutions.

Law schools are populated by about 50 % women, but many leave law firms or the practice altogether within a few years, negatively affecting the demographics and the economics of those firms. Thus, finding practical and reasonable answers to maternity leave, partnership and promotion questions are critical to law firm success. Professors Dillon and Horn reviewed these pragmatic issues, along with overriding legal requirements (such as Title VII and the Family Medical Leave Act), specifically commenting on the EEOC's new guidance regarding "Family Responsibilities Discrimination."

TWL is proud of this illuminating watershed publication, which will be posted on its website; it should guide the legal profession in the coming years. Coverage of the CLE and study will follow in the *Texas Bar Journal*, as well.

Further information can be obtained from **Bree Buchanan**, TWL President and Executive Director of Annie's List in Austin, 512 481-8100; **Mary Evelyn McNamara**, TWL President-Elect and attorney with Brown McCarroll, L.L.P. in Austin, 512-472-5456; **Sharon Schweitzer**, TWL Secretary and Founder of the Protocol & Etiquette Academy, LLC, 512-360-1845; or **Andrea M. Johnson**, TWL Treasurer and Partner of Powers & Frost, LLP, in Houston, 713-767-1575.

OFFICERS

Bree Buchanan
President

Mary Evelyn McNamara
Vice President

Sharon Schweitzer
Secretary

Andrea M. Johnson
Treasurer

Karen Smith
Immediate Past President

AT LARGE DIRECTORS

Carolyn Moore
Renee McElhaney
Pam Linberg
Kelli Chism Jones
Gwendolyn Frost
Laurie Pleasant
Melissa A. Dorman
Regina Adams
Allyson L. Wilkinson
Jeanne C. "Cezy" Collins

REPRESENTATIVE TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lauren Waddell—For
Association of Women
Attorneys

Susan G. Morrison—For
Travis County Women's
Lawyer Association

JUDICIAL ADVISORS

The Hon. Jan Patterson
The Hon. Pamela Mathy
The Hon. Rose Reyna

^a Since its inception in 1965, the Texas Bar Foundation has awarded more than \$8.5 million in grants to law-related programs. Supported by members of the State Bar of Texas, the Texas Bar Foundation is the nation's largest charitably-funded foundation.