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*the* Advocate



*A Publication of the Colorado Women's Bar Association*

# Women Running the World



# TEAM LEGALLY PINK

# CWBA

COLORADO WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION





President's Letter || Wendy Weigler

# Empowered Women, Running the World

Last fall, a group of CWBA members and friends gathered together to run or walk (or sleep in!) in the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure on CWBA's team, *Legally Pink*. The chilly, rainy weather caused the overall crowd to be somewhat smaller than usual, but the spirit and energy was as strong as ever. Race for the Cure is one of my favorite days of the year, no matter the weather, because it is a true demonstration of people coming together, completely united for a cause. On this day, a fully diverse group of individuals, all of whom have been touched and hurt by cancer, take a united stand to remember, celebrate, and support loved ones, and to find a cure for the demon that does not discriminate. These days, it is hard to find such a display of unity and when we do, we should cherish the moment.

The #MeToo Movement was another stunning example of unity, of woman supporting and empowering one another. The Movement and the resulting Time's Up initiative (the entertainment industry's legal defense fund to help less privileged victims of sexual misconduct) raised issues that hit close to home for many of us and caused us to continue to ask "what can we do" and "how can we help?"

At the CWBA, we are united in our desire to keep our programming and

initiatives relevant and current. The CWBA is not a group that rests on its laurels. We constantly strive to do more, offer more, and help more. We are always asking ourselves, what else can we be doing to support our profession and our community? In the coming months, the CWBA has plans to provide opportunities to our members to tackle the pervasive issues raised by #MeToo, including in our programming and presentations at our Annual Convention on May 18-20, 2018, and through pro bono representation.

You can count on the CWBA to stand united to support women when they are at their most vulnerable, whether it be a cancer diagnosis or sexual harassment, or something else entirely. Thank you for being on our team.

Very truly yours,

Wendy E. Weigler  
2017-2018 President  
Colorado Women's Bar Association

*Wendy Weigler is the current President of the Colorado Women's Bar Association. Wendy is an attorney at Winzenburg, Leff, Purvis, & Payne, LLP, where her practice focuses on community association law, including the representation of condominium communities and homeowners associations throughout Colorado.*

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## Lawyers Get Cancer, Too: Facing a Life-Threatening Diagnosis and Maintaining a Legal Practice

As lawyers, we invest a significant amount of our time and self into our careers. How would you protect that investment and maintain your identity as an attorney if you were diagnosed with a life-threatening illness?



Diana Powell

The following CWBA members and cancer survivors graciously offered to share their insights on this topic:

**Diana Powell** recently retired from Gutterman Griffiths P.C.

**Marie Drake** is a solo practitioner at The Drake Law Firm, P.C.

**Monica McElyea** is a solo practitioner at The Law Office of Monica S. McElyea, LLC.

**Mrs. M.** is an international transactional attorney who asked to be anonymous.



Marie Drake

**Were you concerned that your diagnosis would impact your legal practice?**

**Mrs. M.:** Yes. My story is somewhat unique because I was diagnosed after undergoing fertility treatments and had stepped back from active practice with the hope of starting a family.



Monica McElyea

After undergoing treatment, I wanted to resume my practice but was (and remain) very concerned that my diagnosis—and the time I spent away from practice for treatment—would hinder my ability to get hired.

**Diana:** Yes. I was one of four shareholders in a woman-owned law firm. I had practiced law for thirty-one years. I worried it would kill my practice if others knew I was sick, but realized that this was not news that could be kept secret. Although I was initially in denial, I was in the fight of my life and the durability of my practice was not actually going to be my highest concern.

**Did you share your diagnosis with your colleagues?**

**Monica:** I am a solo practitioner and had to be in court immediately after receiving my diagnosis. I broke down and shared this news with the clerk and judge. Honestly, I did not have time to consider whether I wanted to share this information or not. In retrospect, however, not sharing was not an option. The court was incredibly supportive and flexible with respect to scheduling matters around my treatment. My colleagues in the Fifth Judicial District were also wonderful and offered to step in to assist on my cases.

**Were you able to maintain your practice while receiving treatment?**

**Diana:** Yes, with the support of my colleagues. I left for a double mastectomy the first week of December 2011 and returned to practice in June 2012. In that time, I did nothing but chemo and healing. One of my fellow shareholders covered five trials for me and another shepherded my associate.

**How was your transition back into practice?**

**Diana:** I was able to return to a fully functioning practice. I had tremendous support from colleagues all over the state who referred cases to me after I returned. Far from the fears that I would not be taken seriously having been so ill, my illness was actually a reason for these folks to support me the best way they knew to do so. I still practice at the top of practice, and love being a lawyer as much now as when I graduated from law school in 1980.

**What professional advice would you give attorneys diagnosed with cancer?**

**Marie:** If you are a solo practitioner, make sure you have a disability policy that is paid privately so it will not be taxed. Also, I strongly encourage women not to be passive when it comes to a cancer diagnosis. I did a lot of research and found, for me, the best treatment was a combination of surgery and a strict ketogenic diet. I also had to take a hard look at, and am still working on, my lifestyle. Stress is a contributing factor to cancer. I started meditating and doing other things to take better care of myself.

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# Women Running the World

## *Race for the Cure*

By Jessie Pellant

The theme of this issue of *The Advocate* is empowered women running the world. *Legally Pink* is the CWBA team that runs, walks, and supports the Susan G. Koman Race for the Cure and has done so for the past 5 years. It is a group of empowered women, who running together for a cause can display an awesome amount of force. The race this year was September 24, 2017, and brought together a fierce group of women willing to “be more than pink” and get out and make a physical appearance to support the fight against breast cancer. As captain of the team it is a cause I obviously feel very strongly about and champion because, like so many of our fellow sisters, I have been touched by cancer but only on the periphery. I have had to stand by and provide encouragement, support, emotional availability, time and love to those I care about who have been affected directly and suffered from cancer. When I run, I feel overwhelmed and physically taken over by the mass amount of people that come together on one day to demonstrate their love and support. This is juxtaposed by someone who was the reason I started the team *Legally Pink*, our immediate past president Sarah Chase McRorie, who offered a sobering, vulnerable opinion of the race and what it means to her. “Honestly – I don’t really like the race for the cure. I do it because I feel like I have to be a face for others to connect to. And here is why I have a hard time being there, because I still could/could have been a name on the “in memory” cards. Having faced my mortality so up close and in my face, it scares me to think I could be a name on someone’s shirt. I understand the importance of such a visible event to raise awareness and money for treatment and research, I am so happy the event takes place. Without it we would definitely not raise as much money or be as visible, but personally, it’s hard for me to be there. I’m happy that others are there celebrating loved ones and if I do pass away

of breast cancer, I hope you have a huge team in my honor (LOL) but for now breast cancer still scares me and the race brings those feelings up for me.” Sarah, like many others in our organization and around the world, have such strength, poise and resilience and it is important to me to do whatever I can to raise them up and demonstrate my compassion for them, so I will keep running.

Next year consider joining us, we are looking forward to a couch to 5K program put together by our Historian and avid runner, Diane Wozniak in an effort to gain participation for *Legally Pink*. “I’ve been touched by so many who have fought cancer. It’s inspiring to see so many strong women at this event year after year. Events like this help build our community and bring awareness to the fight for a cure for breast cancer – for women and men. I enjoyed toeing the line and creating a deeper connection with fellow CWBA members, outside doing something I love – running. I hope that you will join us next year!”

Team *Legally Pink* is a “Star in Pink” for all its fundraising efforts over the past 5 years – an awesome achievement. Our goal going forward is to be the largest team in the Denver area bringing together empowered women to the forefront of the cause.



Jessie Pellant, founder of StudioliP, specializes in identifying, acquiring, developing, protecting or enforcing Intellectual property rights domestically and internationally. In recognition of Jessie’s ability to serve her clients as a trusted advisor, Colorado Super Lawyers Magazine recognized Jessie as one of its Rising Stars in 2015, 2016 and 2017. Jessie is a graduate of the University of Colorado, Boulder and Gonzaga University School of Law, graduating with honors. Prior to StudioliP, Jessie clerked for Judge Hansen in the Fourth Judicial District of Idaho, and practiced IP at Lathrop & Gage LLP, Dorsey & Whitney LLP and Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck.



## Inside The CWBA: Meet Miranda Hawkins

### Board Member Spotlight



**Be patient, but have a plan.** This sage advice comes from the **CWBA's At-Large Representative, Miranda Hawkins.** The guidance came in the context of how to transition from one practice area to another, but after speaking with Ms. Hawkins, it is evident that she embodies this advice in many aspects of her life.

Ms. Hawkins began her legal career as a clerk for a state district court judge. After gaining courtroom experience, she joined a law firm's ERISA litigation team. Seven years later, she had the realization that is familiar to so many lawyers: she was burned out. She had a gut feeling that estate planning would be a better fit for her. She was right. She has been estate planning for the past ten years, and is now a named partner at Goddard & Hawkins, P.C. Her favorite part about working in this area is giving her clients peace of mind.

Ms. Hawkins' shift from an ERISA litigator to an estate lawyer did not happen overnight. It took patience, and it took planning. When I asked Ms. Hawkins how she took on such a monumental task, she had another nugget of wisdom: do something small every day. Ms. Hawkins started by educating herself in the relevant topic areas, taking CLEs, and even auditing a class on taxes at the University of Denver. She then networked with lawyers in the estate planning field, including Susan Goddard. It was Ms. Goddard who mentored her through the transition, and, when an opening came up in her firm, it was Ms. Goddard who gave Ms. Hawkins her first shot at working in estate planning. The same Ms. Goddard now shares the title of named partner with Ms. Hawkins at Goddard & Hawkins, P.C.

Ms. Goddard also encouraged Ms. Hawkins to join the CWBA. Ms. Hawkins started by attending a Raising the Bar dinner, and ended up on the convention committee. She increased her involvement over time, and by 2009 she was on the CWBA Board of Directors as the At-Large Representative. She took a step back for a few years when she had her children, her son Holden (now 7), and daughter Margot (now 5). Luckily for CWBA members, Ms. Hawkins has jumped back in to the CWBA full-time, and rejoined the Board last year as At-Large Representative.



Miranda and her children Holden and Margot.

In her role, Ms. Hawkins works to ensure that the CWBA engages and supports the diversity bars and the chapters of the CWBA across the state. In this vein, Ms. Hawkins (along with her co-chair Whitney Beck) coordinated a Board leadership training webinar and video replays of Denver programs for CWBA chapters across the state. She also has set the goal of meeting all CWBA chapter leaders in person this year.

Both inside and outside the CWBA, Ms. Hawkins pays forward the mentoring she received when making her career change. She frequently meets with women looking to transition into other areas

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# Social Media

## Top Five Tips For Promoting Your Law Firm Through Social Media

By Veronique Van Gheem and Meranda M. Vieyra

**Social media marketing is standard in many firms' overall marketing strategy.** An active social media presence allows potential clients to research you and your firm. It doesn't have to be a chore; developing your business and building your reputation can be fun! Yet, posting content on social media does not automatically drive client development. As with other marketing strategies, consistency is key.

**Meranda M. Vieyra**, who has been a legal professional in Denver for nearly twenty years, owns Denver Legal Marketing LLC. By breaking it down into five easy steps, Meranda gives lawyers insight into how to establish a digital identity.

### 1. Choose Which Platforms To Use

There are many social media platforms out there, so where do you start? It depends on what is appropriate for your practice area and who you are trying to reach. Key factors to consider include gender, age, income, occupation, industry, and education level. Understanding these aspects of your ideal clients will guide you to the right social media platform. The most recent [Pew Research Center survey](#) shows that Facebook is the most popular social media platform, with 79% of online adults using it. By contrast, only 29% of online adults use LinkedIn. However, the [2015 ABA Legal Technology Survey Report](#) showed that 73% of lawyers and 57% of law firms surveyed have a presence on LinkedIn. These numbers have grown in subsequent years, making LinkedIn a great platform for businesses providing services to lawyers and law firms depending on referrals.

### 2. Integrate Social Media Into Your Marketing Plan

An average lawyer should spend 200 hours per year on marketing to be successful. That means that you should be spending about four hours per week promoting yourself and your law firm. Social media marketing may take up only a small part of that four hours, but think about ways you can integrate social media into your current marketing

efforts. For example, if networking is your preferred marketing method, consider tweeting about an event you are attending. Alternatively, if you are not into glad-handing, blogging may be a more effective marketing tool. Or, check-in on Facebook when you are sitting on a panel or lecturing at an event.

### 3. Create Interesting Content To Share

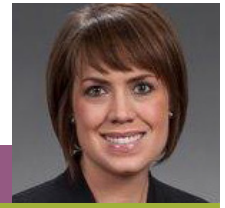
About 80% of your social media posts must be about your clients. The other 20% can be sales-oriented, like congratulating an associate for an achievement. You can address the pains of your potential clients; post articles; answer frequently asked questions about your services and practice areas; or debunk common misconceptions about hiring a lawyer. Be sure to engage with your potential clients and address topics that would interest them—it should be a conversation.

Also, much of what is consumed on social media is not text, but video, photos, and infographics. So, think outside of the box, be creative, and be helpful.

### 4. Form A Monthly Plan

Look at the month ahead and create a 30-day social media plan. Is there something going on in your law firm that you need to promote? Are there upcoming holidays that affect your clients' industries? Find relevant news in your practice area that you feel comfortable discussing. Then, decide on which platforms to use and on which days. Fast-moving platforms, like Twitter, require you to post a couple times per day. Slower-moving platforms, like Facebook and LinkedIn, may need only two to three posts per week. Take a couple hours in the beginning of the month to plan and use an automation tool to implement your plan. Hootsuite has analytics that will help you post at the best times, or you can customize the schedule. Although your plan is automated, remember to stay in the conversation by responding to messages and posts.

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## *Presiding Denver County Court Judge Theresa Spahn Honored at Annual Judicial Reception in March 2018*

The CWBA's Annual Judicial Reception honors all members of the Colorado judiciary, as well as a specific judicial officer for her or his meaningful work. Past honorees include 19th Judicial District Court Judge Julie Hoskins (2017), U.S. Magistrate Judge Kristen L. Mix (2016), and Denver County Court Judge Doris E. Burd (2015).



The CWBA Judicial Committee is pleased to announce that **Presiding County Court Judge Theresa Spahn is the honoree for the 2018 Judicial Reception.** Judge Spahn was appointed to the Denver County Court bench in 2014 and has served as the Presiding Judge since January 2017.

Judge Spahn grew up in Northwest Denver and was not sure college was an option for her, let alone law school. She had an interest in advocacy, however, and persevered as the first member of her family to go to college, attending Metropolitan State University and finishing at Western State Colorado University before pursuing her law degree at the University of Denver Sturm College of Law.

When asked about the path that led Judge Spahn to her current role, she explained she “never really planned it out strategically . . . each position opened the doors for the next one,” and “it is all about the people behind you, encouraging you” to seek opportunities. There were many times, she commented, when others suggested opportunities and said “you should do this,” which encouraged her to take risks she might not have taken otherwise.

Judge Spahn's early experiences included a position with a domestic relations law firm before she accepted a position as a Deputy District Attorney with the Adams County District Attorney's Office in

1989. In 1992, she accepted a position with the Mesa County District Attorney's Office, where she focused on crimes against children and spearheaded the Sexual Abuse Task Force.

Encouraged by friends, family, and colleagues, Judge Spahn applied for a magistrate judge opening in the 17th Judicial District in 1994. During her seven-year tenure in this role, she presided over juvenile, domestic, and criminal cases and discovered she truly loved the role of a judge and the chance to “make decisions and impact lives.” From 2001 to 2009, Judge Spahn took the experiences she had observed in the courtroom to her role as the Executive Director for the Colorado Office of the Child Representative where she focused on improving the consistency and quality of child representation. Judge Spahn grew this office from the ground up, ultimately managing a significant staff and volunteer base, balancing a budget of \$18 million, garnering bi-partisan support on public policy and budget issues, and achieving national recognition. As one colleague stated, “Under [Judge Spahn's] leadership, the Office evolved to one of the premier state agencies providing legal services to children.”

In 2009, Judge Spahn accepted the position as the Director for the O'Connor Judicial Selection Initiative with the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System. In this role, Judge Spahn created a national policy reform initiative, drafted model provisions, and created a system to promote fair and impartial courts for all citizens.

Judge Spahn briefly went back into private practice before returning to the bench in 2014. “Busy” and “exciting” are two words Judge Spahn used to describe a day in the life of a County Court Judge. She highlighted that the Denver County Court bench is “more diverse” than others in Colorado, and touted her fellow judges' “enthusiasm, talent, smarts, and dedication.”

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# Women in the Bar and on the Bench: *Defying the Odds*

By Samantha T.F. Lillehoff

[Martinez v. Colorado Oil & Gas Conservation Commission](#), 2017COA37, is captivating on many levels. Amicus briefs were filed on behalf of just under thirty entities, including government agencies, religious organizations, and environmental groups. In an opinion issued on March 23, 2017, the *Martinez* court, with one judge dissenting, disagreed with the way the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission had viewed the nature and scope of its obligation to regulate oil and gas production in the interests of public health, safety, and welfare pursuant to the Oil and Gas Conservation Act, §§ 34-60-101 to -130, C.R.S. 2017. According to the interpretation advocated by the Commission, section 34-60-102(1)(a)(I) required it to strike a balance between oil and gas production and public health, safety, and welfare. However, the *Martinez* majority concluded that, under the statute, the public health, safety, and welfare is not a factor to be weighed in a balancing test, but, rather, a “condition that must be fulfilled” by the Commission in regulating oil and gas production. In May 2017, Colorado Attorney General, Cynthia Coffman, filed a Petition for Writ of Certiorari with the Colorado Supreme Court; this petition remains pending.

*Martinez* is notable not only because of the opinion’s legal effect, but also because of the judges and attorneys involved with the case. Judges Laurie Booras, Terry Fox, and Joann Vogt—the division of Colorado Court of Appeals judges deciding the case—and Julia Olsen (with Wild Earth Advocates) and Brittany Beckstead (with the Colorado Attorney General’s office)—the attorneys who argued on behalf of the parties at oral argument—are all women.

Nationally, according to a January 2017 report from the American Bar Association’s Commission on Women in the Profession, 36% of legal professionals are women. Of attorneys in private practice, women represent 48.7% of summer associates, 45% of associates, just over 20% of partners, and 18% of equity partners. Of Fortune 500 general counsel, only 24.8% are women. Women represent 31.1% of state court judges and 27.1% of all judges, state and federal. There is reason to hope that these statistics

will continue to improve: as of December 2016, for the first time, women represented the majority of law students in the United States.

In Colorado, where the first women were admitted to practice law in 1891, a woman did not serve on the Colorado Supreme Court until 1979, when Justice Jean E. Dubofsky was appointed. Now, three out of seven (or roughly 43%) of the Justices on the Colorado Supreme Court are women, including Chief Justice Nancy E. Rice. On the Colorado Court of Appeals, eight out of twenty-two (or roughly 36%) active judges are women. Of the 222 district court judges handling civil and criminal matters in Colorado’s twenty-two judicial districts, sixty-one (or roughly 28%) are women. Only three judicial districts—the tenth, twelfth, and twentieth—have a female chief judge. Three other districts—the thirteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth—have never had a woman serve as a District Court Judge. Of all the active justices and judges on the Colorado Supreme Court, Colorado Court of Appeals, and Colorado District Courts, 28.7% are women.

As for the federal bench in Colorado, a woman did not serve as a federal judge in Colorado until 1979, when President Carter appointed Zita L. Weinshienk. The current chief judge of the U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado, Judge Marcia S. Krieger, is a woman. Two out of six (or roughly 33%) active Article III federal judges in Colorado are women. While not as rare as it once was for an all-female group of attorneys to argue a case to an all-female panel of judges, it is still more rare than it should be. But, the occurrence will likely become more common given the growing representation of women in the legal profession. As the largest specialty bar association in Colorado, the CWBA is in a uniquely prominent position to promote gender equality in the legal profession.



*Samantha T.F. Lillehoff is a CWBA Publications Committee member and a law clerk for Judge Terry Fox on the Colorado Court of Appeals.*





Elizabeth Howard || Alison Connaughty



## 2017 CWBA Mary Lathrop Award: Elizabeth H. McCann

*Professional Advancement Committee*

The CWBA gives its highest honor each year, the Mary Lathrop Award, to an honoree who embodies the spirit of the award to its fullest. The award goes to those women who have been trailblazers in the law, have served the mission of advancing women in the law, and have made notable remarkable differences in our legal community.



It is with great pleasure that we will present **Elizabeth H. McCann (Beth)** with the **2018 Mary Lathrop Award** in May at the CWBA's Annual Convention, as she embodies and exemplifies all of these traits. Beth's accomplishments are so vast and varied that we can hardly do them justice in this

publication. Nevertheless, the Honorable Ann Frick provided valuable insight, describing McCann as having "more strength, determination, courage and grit than any woman [Judge Frick] knows."

McCann graduated *magna cum laude* from Wittenberg University in Ohio with a B.A. in American Studies in 1971 and received her law degree from Georgetown Law Center in 1974, where she was only one of five women in a 125 person section. She was licensed to practice law in Colorado in 1974, starting her career as a judicial clerk with the U.S. District Court. As her Clerkship neared an end, McCann wanted to try her hand at litigation, and got a job at the Denver District Attorney's Office in 1976, where she worked her way up to Chief Deputy District Attorney – a post she held until 1983. McCann left the district attorney's office for private practice at Cooper & Kelley, P.C. from 1984 until 1991, making partner in 1985. McCann returned to the public sector in September 1991, as

the first female Manager of Safety for the City and County of Denver. In that position, she objected to the Fire Department's physical agility test because she believed it was discriminatory against women and, ultimately changed the department policy. She later served as the Safe City Coordinator, Director of Excise and Licenses, and a Deputy Attorney General for the Colorado Attorney General's Office.

In 2008, McCann was elected to represent House District 8 and served as a Colorado State Representative until 2017. Her major legislative accomplishments include passing landmark human trafficking legislation, laws to provide due process for children facing charges as adults, obtaining funding for domestic violence survivors, prohibiting solitary confinement for children, requiring fairness for homeowners in the foreclosure process, requiring fair treatment of women by health insurance companies, and addressing prescription drug abuse in Colorado.

On January 10, 2017, after a previous unsuccessful run for Denver District Attorney in 2004, McCann was sworn in as Denver's first female district attorney. McCann's preparation, unwavering determination, and tireless campaigning carried the day. She won this election by a 74 percent margin.

In addition to and in conjunction with her vast professional accomplishments, McCann is a fierce advocate for advancing women in the law. You feel it as soon as you speak with her. Despite her profound work, she makes each and every person she speaks with feel valued and heard. McCann is a founding member and past President of the CWBA. She helped form the CWBA in 1978 not only to address discrimination in the profession, but also to focus on gender-specific legal questions about health insurance, maternity leave, property ownership, and more. She also served as Chair of the CWBA Foundation and helped raise money for

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Jessie Pellant || CWBA Publications Committee Member

## The 1891

### Publications Committee Update

**The Advocate:** 2017 and 2018 are facelift years for the publications committee. As you can see, The Advocate is now completely digital and accessible via the website. This allows for ease of hyperlinking references or case cites with the goal of making the information more accessible to our membership. Later this year be on the lookout for a survey so the committee can gauge how the all-digital transition is being received by you, our readers, and we will gladly accept further recommendations on how to make the newsletter a must read for you.

**The Blog:** Along with our exclusively digital newsletter, the publications committee has decided to launch a blog to make relevant and timely information even more accessible to our members and the general public. The blog will be in furtherance of the CWBA's mission to advance and promote women in the legal profession and the interests of women generally. The blog will be another conduit to provide countless opportunities to meet with other members, provide training and education, network, build relationships and community, and publicize our unique programs. We are an organization of women who inspire change, appreciate our differences, and foster a great community. Today, communities are built, supported, and sustained through up-to-date virtual connections, and it is time for the CWBA to take advantage of this untapped resource. We are hoping the blog proves very valuable to our membership particularly, and also to all female members of the Colorado bar who subscribe.

**The Details:** The blog will go live this spring and will be accessible via the website. Anyone may subscribe to the blog free of charge. The information on the blog will be pushed to our other social networks such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter with the idea of reaching as much of our legal community as possible. The blog content will be accessible to other committees and will reference activities of other committees of the CWBA to ensure it is being used to its full potential.

- **Title:** The 1891. Why? In 1891—29 years before women gained the right to vote in the United States—Mary Sternberg Thomas and Josephine Moody Luthe became the first women admitted to the practice of law in Colorado.

- **Content:** The 1891 content will consist of the following six types of posts:
  - > **Under Pressure:** working women's pressure points such as low ROI networking, challenges of working mothers, maintaining productivity, and finding supportive networks
  - > **Tales from the Trenches:** stories of triumphs, overcoming bias and obstacles, and being a woman in a male dominated field; updates from CWBA event attendees with take away points from the event
  - > **Outside the Law:** what we do to have fun and how we volunteer
  - > **Professional Spotlight:** promoting women and their accomplishments
  - > **Book Club:** monthly in-person meetings, discussions regarding legally relevant books, possibility to evolve into other subject-based events
  - > **#IRL (In Real Life):** meet up options, informal platform to advertise CWBA events and encourage participation and buddy system for events, or way to connect informally with other members with like interests or geographic proximity
- **Volunteers:** We have a call to action to our membership for those members who might be interested in joining the publications committee to participate with the blog. A recent focus of the CWBA is micro-volunteerism with the idea that everyone can participate in a small way, and we are hoping the blog will provide that very opportunity. If you would like to contribute in any way to the blog please reach out to the publications co-chairs Jessie Pellant or Abbie Cziok. Getting published has never been so easy or taken such little time! [jpellant@studioiplaw.com](mailto:jpellant@studioiplaw.com), [abbie.cziok@gmail.com](mailto:abbie.cziok@gmail.com).

*Jessie Pellant, founder of StudioIP, specializes in identifying, acquiring, developing, protecting or enforcing Intellectual property rights domestically and internationally. Prior to StudioIP, Jessie clerked for Judge Hansen in the Fourth Judicial District of Idaho, and practiced IP at Lathrop & Gage LLP, Dorsey & Whitney LLP, and Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck.*

# Someone's Gotta Say It: *It's Okay to Plateau.*

By *Giugi Carminati*

Your legal career is not a marathon, a sprint, or a walk. It is all of those things, at different times, for different reasons. The goal though, is to keep moving forward. One of my greatest sources of sadness is seeing women abandon the practice of law after having children, not because they want to, but because they are not given the opportunity to ease back into it. The answer to this is to allow yourself to plateau. Just like in a long-distance race. Even if sometimes you need to walk, you are still making progress. Just don't stop unless you really want to.

I started my first job out of law school pregnant with my second son. Another female partner, one that I had become close to, gave me the best advice I failed to take. She told me, "take all of your maternity leave. Nobody will remember you came back early, but everyone will remember you sucked." She was right. I came back to work 13 weeks after my delivery, stupidly leaving 5 weeks of maternity leave on the table. I wasn't ready, but I didn't know it yet. My mind wasn't as sharp, I wasn't as resilient, and I was not delivering the same level of work product with the same consistency as I was before my leave. My problem wasn't that I couldn't perform at the same level as before, my problem was that I was trying to prove I could be a great lawyer and actively grow my career all while my body was still adjusting to one of the largest transformations a human can go through. I should have focused on doing my job, doing it well, and taking care of myself and my babies. When my reviews started rolling in they were subpar and I was crushed. The partner who had given me that advice was right: nobody remembered I had come back early from maternity leave, but everyone remembered I had a "rocky patch." The truth is, I tried to do too much too soon. I felt inadequate and unable to keep up, and, as a young attorney I became unsure about whether I would be able to recover. Nonetheless, I put my head down and did my best. As time passed and the fog of having two

kids under two faded, I found my footing and made it back to the top of my game.

Twenty-three months after the birth of my second son, I had my third. This time I knew better. I took my entire maternity leave and when I came back, I gave myself time to recover. I was a good employee, a good mom, and a good lawyer. I took care of my children and my clients, while consistently delivering for my partners. But I didn't try to outperform myself, or others, and I didn't put undue pressure on myself. Simply put, I paced myself. I knew that the plateau was temporary and that I needed to keep performing as an attorney, but I didn't have to excel at everything. By the time I had my daughter, my fourth and (I think) final child, I was a pro at this. I gave myself the year after her birth to do my job and do it well, but I also took a breather. I wasn't the first person at the office, nor was I the last, to leave. If I needed to push deadlines or team calls, I did. The best part? Nobody noticed. To everyone around me, I was still operating at 100%.

Women, mothers especially, put inordinate pressure on themselves, especially after the birth of a child. The fact is, we can be good lawyers, excellent lawyers even, without putting in that superhuman push to grow our careers. We may be afraid that we are slipping backwards and, in the process, feel overwhelmed and give up. But there is another option: stay in the race, just slow down and walk for a while. You can gear up for another sprint, you just don't have to do it now. It's okay to plateau.



*Giugi Carminati is a women's advocate and litigator in Denver, CO. She speaks and blogs about gender equality and social justice. Her law practice focuses on representing women, ranging from C-Suite executives to professionals to low income workers, as well as domestic violence and sexual assault victims. She is a litigator by training. She speaks French, English, Italian and Spanish. She is licensed in Texas, New York, Colorado and DC. Her firm website can be found at [www.TheWomansLawyer.com](http://www.TheWomansLawyer.com).*

*"Someone's Gotta Say It" is a regular fun feature of The Advocate, committed to bringing you true, relevant, and/or hilarious information.*

Continued from page 3

**Diana:** My greatest advice to young attorneys is to plan ahead for disasters so that unexpected events don't take out your law firm or your family.

**What do you think the CWBA can do to support attorneys with cancer?**

**Mrs. M.:** The CWBA should continue to support legislation that will help those diagnosed with serious illnesses, like legislation supporting paid family medical leave. Under our current system, pursuing treatment for a serious illness can make you choose between work and treatment. Also, cancer can be a very isolating disease. Opening the dialogue makes you realize that almost everyone has been touched by cancer in some way. To that end, the CWBA could have programming on coping with illnesses and formalize a list of resources for members.

**Monica:** The CWBA should consider providing assistance with medical bills or dues, organizing a network of volunteer attorneys to assist members with their cases, or facilitating communication among members who have or are going through treatment.

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*Thank you to these and the many other women who volunteered to share their experiences.*

*Marie Drake was born in Weisbaden, Germany, and grew up in Crested Butte, Colorado. She is a trial attorney and a graduate of Gerry Spence's Trial Lawyers College. Having cancer taught Marie to have a daily gratitude practice, especially now that cancer is in her rearview mirror.*

*Monica S. McElyea graduated from The Walter F. George School of Law, Mercer University in 1991. Monica practiced law in her home State of Virginia for five years before moving to Colorado. She has practiced law in Summit County, Colorado, for 20 years, focusing on family law and criminal defense, and is very active in her local community.*

*Diana Powell has been a shareholder at Gutterman Griffiths since 2002, was president from 2002-2014, and recently retired.*

*Allison Kostecka a CWBA Publications Committee member and an attorney at Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP where she specializes in securities, cross-border, and other types of complex commercial litigation.*

**JOIN OR RENEW  
TODAY!**

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*Miranda's children Holden and Margot.*

of the law and sees the CWBA as a great avenue for building mentorship relationships. She is also on the Board of Directors for Denver Mother Attorneys Mentoring Association (Denver MAMA). When not creating peace of mind for her clients or mentoring the women of Colorado, Ms. Hawkins can be found spending time with her family.

*Brandan Oliver is a member of the CWBA Publications Committee and Corporate Counsel on the transactions team at DISH Network L.L.C.*

**REGISTER NOW!**

A circular logo for the CWBA 41st Annual Convention. The logo features a blue background with a yellow horizontal band across the middle. The text "WONDER WOMEN!" is written in a stylized, yellow, comic-book font at the top. Below that, "CWBA" is written in large, bold, yellow letters. Underneath "CWBA", the dates "MAY 18-20, 2018" and the location "THE SEBASTIAN - VAIL" are written in smaller yellow text. At the bottom of the circle, "41ST ANNUAL CONVENTION" is written in yellow. There are four yellow stars around the inner edge of the circle.

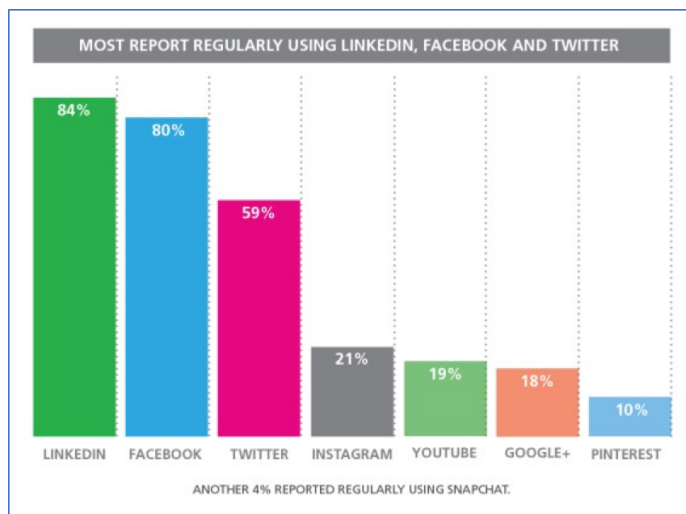
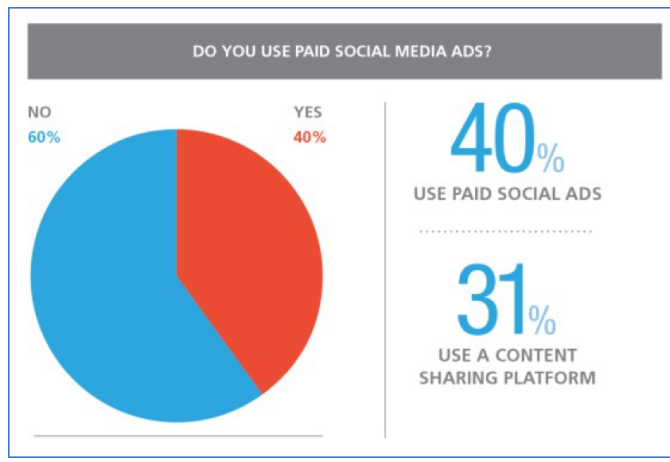
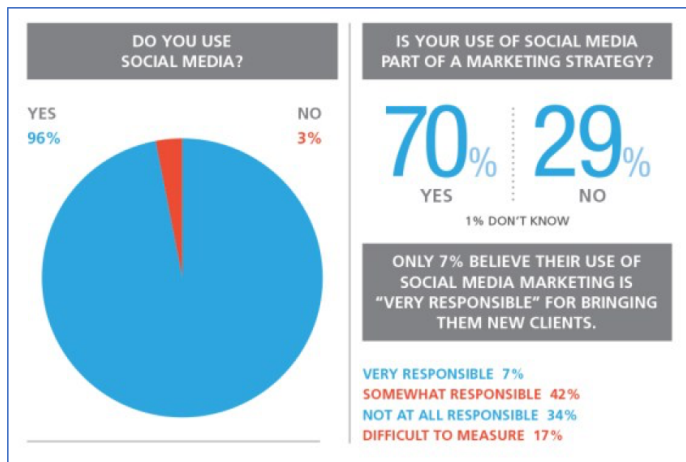
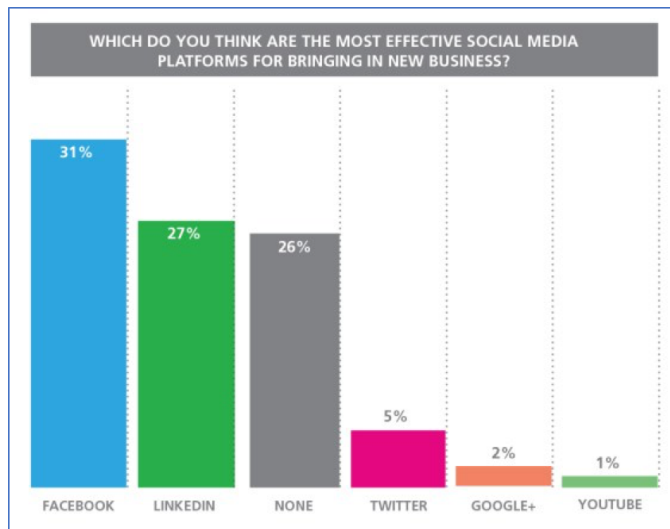
**www.cwba.org/convention**

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### 5. Determine Whether It Is Working

At the end of the month, look at your profile analytics to see what is working. For example, your LinkedIn notifications will show you who looked at your posts, where they work, and what their title is. What posts were relevant to your audience? Make sure to analyze what you are doing and check out the metrics to confirm that your strategy is fruitful. Then, adjust your efforts. Your plan should not look the same every month, nor should your posts. Find creative ways to connect with your clients and case-referral base.

Attorney at Work did a [survey](#) of 300 lawyers in 2017 regarding their use of social media marketing—here is what they learned:



Veronique Van Gheem is Senior Assistant Legal Counsel for the Colorado Judicial Department. Ms. Van Gheem works in the Executive Division of the State Court Administrator's Office providing general advisory counsel for the Colorado courts, probation departments and the State Court Administrator.



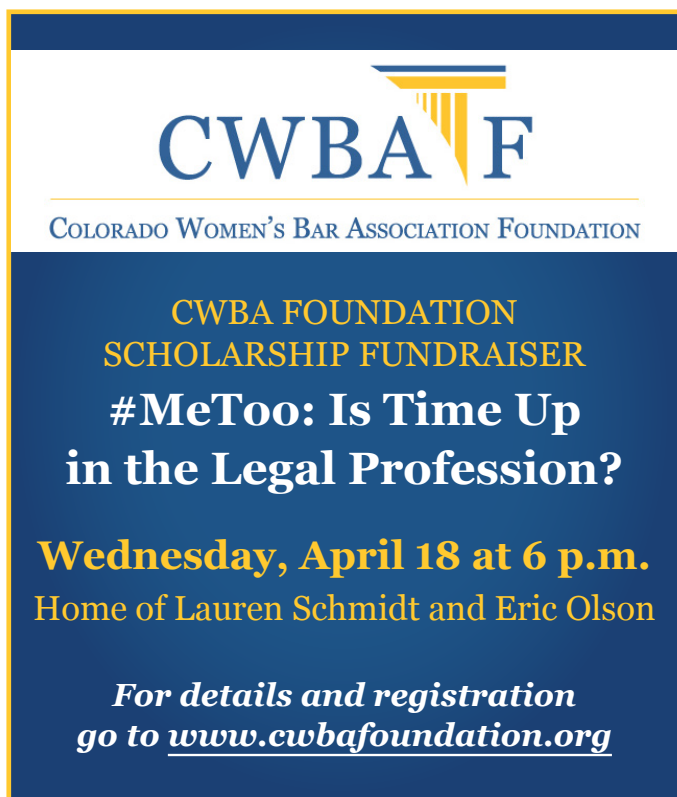
Meranda M. Vieyra is the owner of Denver Legal Marketing LLC. She is one of the most visible legal professionals in Colorado law with nearly 20 years of service in the Denver legal community. Her marketing firm has earned a strong reputation as the go-to for impactful, cost-effective legal marketing strategies.



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Throughout Judge Spahn's impressive career path, she has been a dedicated and involved member of the CWBA. She served on the Board of Directors for several years and served as President from 2007-2008. Paying it forward is paramount to Judge Spahn as well. She believes strongly in the power of good mentors, having found her own mentors through the CWBA, in prior positions, and through other informal mentoring relationships. Judge Spahn believes professional growth in the legal field is a "team effort" and that when women "support each other, pull each other forward, use contacts to help each other, and encourage each other," we can go far. This sentiment was echoed by colleagues and mentees of Judge Spahn's who describe her as a "great mentor and leader," someone who "reaches down and lifts up other women as they pursue their goals," a "trailblazer for women in the legal field," and someone who sees it as her "duty to advance women." As she stated repeatedly, it all comes back to "good relationships."

*Elizabeth Meck is a CWBA Board Member and Co-Chair of the Judicial Committee. She is a Vice President with The Northern Trust Company where she focuses on all aspects of trust and estate administration.*



The graphic features the CWBA logo at the top, which consists of the letters 'CWBA' in a blue serif font and 'F' in a blue sans-serif font, with a stylized yellow and blue bar above the 'F'. Below the logo, the text 'COLORADO WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION' is written in a smaller blue font. The main body of the graphic is dark blue with white and yellow text. It reads: 'CWBA FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISER #MeToo: Is Time Up in the Legal Profession? Wednesday, April 18 at 6 p.m. Home of Lauren Schmidt and Eric Olson For details and registration go to [www.cwbafoundation.org](http://www.cwbafoundation.org)'

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the scholarship fund to enable young women to pay for a legal education.

McCann is modest when she says that she has served on "several" boards and commissions. Her community involvement is extensive. To note a few of McCann's community activities, McCann served on the Colorado Supreme Court Nominating Commission, Colorado Legal Services Board of Trustees, the Faculty of Federal Advocates Board, CWBA's Foundation Board, the Legal Aid Society of Metro Denver Board, the CBA Board of Governors and Nominating Committee, DBA Board, Young Lawyers Executive Counsel, and the DBA Domestic Violence Task Force.

While McCann is a founding member of the CWBA, and a dedicated public servant, she also has a robust personal life. In 1987, Judge Ann Frick introduced McCann to Christopher Linsmayer, an airline pilot. The two were married in 1988, and share two children, Chris and Lizzy, both Denver East High and Amherst College graduates. McCann loves the outdoors. She has climbed to the base camp of Mr. Everest with a fellow lawyer and Mt. Kilimanjaro with her children. McCann also continues to enjoy skiing and climbing Colorado's 14er's, is described as an "accomplished multi-tasker," and revered for her daily four mile runs. McCann's strength in the face of adversity, determination, courage and grit make her the perfect recipient of this year's Mary Lathrop Award. We look forward to seeing you at the CWBA Convention where we will celebrate Beth McCann, the 2018 Mary Lathrop Award Recipient.

*Elizabeth Howard is a CWBA Board Member and Co-Chair of the CWBA Professional Advancement Committee. She also serves as Secretary on the William E. Doyle Inn of Court Executive Committee. Elizabeth practiced professional liability defense and is currently at home with her daughter.*

*Alison Connaughty is an Assistant Attorney General with the Financial Fraud Unit and specializes in the investigation of criminal insurance fraud and securities fraud cases. She began her prosecution career in 2009 as a Deputy District Attorney in the Jefferson County District Attorney's Office after graduating from the University of Denver Sturm College of Law. In her free time she enjoys cooking, hiking, cycling, and spending time with her husband and her St. Bernard, Daisy.*

# Confetti!

## Bench Strength

- University of Colorado School of Law Professor **Melissa Hart** was appointed to the Colorado Supreme Court, to fill the seat vacated by **Justice Allison Eid** when she was confirmed to the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals.

## On the Move

- **Ashley Emerson**, **Erika Gebhardt**, and **Meagan Moodie** announced the launch of their family law firm, Gebhardt, Emerson & Moodie Family Law, LLC.
- **Susan Goddard**, **CWBA At-Large Representative Miranda Hawkins**, and **Jo Anna Goddard** celebrated the 30th Anniversary of their firm, which is now Goddard & Hawkins, P.C.
- **CWBA Past President Alison Zinn** joined Lathrop Gage as a partner.
- **Stan Garnett** returned to Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck on March 1.
- **Cristal Torres DeHerrera** has been appointed by Denver International Airport as its chief of staff.

## You Were Recognized

- **Jane Michaels** was selected as a Fellow of the College of Commercial Arbitrators (CCA).
- **Chief Justice Nancy Rice** was honored with the Richard Schaden Adopted Alumna Award at the 37th Annual Colorado Law Alumni Awards.

- **Xakema Henderson** was recognized as a 2018 Top 25 Young Professional by *ColoradoBiz Magazine*.

- **Arnulfo D. Hernandez** and **Christine M. Hernandez** were selected as Top Latino Lawyers in 2017 by *Latino Leaders Magazine*.

- **Kathryn Starnella** (CHBA President) and **Christine M. Hernandez** (CHBA President Elect) were elected to the Executive Committee of the Colorado Hispanic Bar Association (CHBA) for 2018.

- **Ashlee Arcilla**, **Kristina Bergsten**, **Melissa Decker**, **Jennifer Hall**, **Tess Hand-Bender**, **Bryon Large**, **Mary Linden**, **Kelley Rider Goodwin**, **Mallory Revel**, **Hannah Seigel Proff**, and **Anda Stephenson** were selected for the 2018 COBALT Class.

- Complex commercial and residential mortgage backed securities litigator **Michael A. Rollin** has been named a "2017 Lawyer of the Year" by *Law Week Colorado*.

- **Maritza Dominguez Braswell** was named one of the Top 25 Most Powerful Women in 2018 by the Colorado Women's Chamber of Commerce.

- CWBA members **Cristal DeHererra** (Chris Miranda Outstanding Hispanic Lawyer), **Martina Hinojosa** (Outstanding New Hispanic Lawyer), and **Veronique Van Gheem** (Individual Community Service Award) were honored at the 2018 Colorado Hispanic Bar Association Annual Banquet.

- **Karen Steinhauser** received the Prentice Marshall Faculty Award for the Development of Innovative Teaching Methods with NITA.

- **CWBA Board Member Alli Gerkman**, **Ellen Trachman**, and **Meranda Vieyra** were selected for the 2018 40 Under 40 Awards from the *Denver Business Journal*.

- Armstrong Teasdale LLP was recognized by the Center for Legal Inclusiveness with the annual Inclusiveness @ Work Award.

## Leading The Way

- South Asian Bar Association of Colorado President **Surbhi Garg** hosted the organization's First Annual Gala.

## Congratulations!

- **CWBA Board Member Judge Adam Espinosa** and his wife Ashley welcomed their second daughter Ainsley Jacqueline Espinosa on February 26.

- **CWBA Treasurer Gretchen Moore** and her husband Jeff welcomed Olivia Deane on March 6.

- **CWBA Board Member Sarah Parady** and her husband **Chris Montville** welcomed their daughter, Imogen Eliza Montville on March 6.

Submit your  
Confetti news to  
[publications@cwba.org](mailto:publications@cwba.org)

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## March

20 | Annual Members Appreciation Reception & Convention Kick-Off

## April

4 | Ft. Collins CLE Program - Leadership For Lawyers: How To Mitigate Bias and Effectively Lead

6 | Law Line 9 | 9News Denver

10 | Equal Pay Day

11 | 8th Annual Moms Luncheon | Gibson Dunn & Crutcher

17 | Mountain Chapter CLE Luncheon | The Sebastian-Vail

## May

18-20 | 41st Annual CWBA Convention "Wonder Women!" | The Sebastian-Vail

18 | Mary Lathrop Award Reception | The Sebastian-Vail

19 | CWBA Annual Meeting & Board Election | The Sebastian-Vail

MORE COMING SOON!

save the date!

**REGISTER NOW!** [www.cwba.org/convention](http://www.cwba.org/convention)



**Interested in sponsoring the 41st Annual CWBA Convention?**

Contact CWBA Executive Director Kim Sporrer at [execdir@cwba.org](mailto:execdir@cwba.org) or 303-831-1040.

*The Advocate* is published seasonally by the Colorado Women's Bar Association. The deadline for articles is the first day of the month prior to the publication month. *The Advocate* team reserves the right to edit any material submitted for publication.

Submit articles or comments to the CWBA, Attention: Advocate Editors, P.O. Box 1918, Denver, CO 80201 or to [publications@cwba.org](mailto:publications@cwba.org).

Send email and address changes to Executive Director, CWBA, P.O. Box 1918, Denver, CO 80201. Phone: (303) 831-1040; e-mail: [execdir@cwba.org](mailto:execdir@cwba.org).

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COLORADO WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION

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For more information about CWBA events, membership, and activities, visit the website at [www.cwba.org](http://www.cwba.org) or contact the CWBA office at (303) 831-1040.