

Women
Attorneys
Association of
Topeka

Summer 2019



WAAT'S HAPPENING

Message from the President

When I first began my one-year term as president of WAAT, several past presidents were sure to warn me that the year would go by quickly. They were absolutely right. I cannot believe I am already passing on the torch to our next president, Amber Smith. However, I am very excited to work under her leadership with our new Board of Directors during the upcoming term. Before I depart, I would like to take a moment to thank the incredible Board of Directors who served with me this year. These 16 amazing women invested significant time and energy into our monthly programs and events. They came up with fresh ideas for presentations, organized social events, created an amazing newsletter, and helped our organization raise more money for the YWCA and Washburn Women's Alliance than ever before at Just Desserts. I cannot take credit for any of our successes, because our board members were the ones who truly did all of the heavy lifting. I am so proud of their efforts, and I want to thank each of them personally for their service to our organization.

As this is my last opportunity to speak to members, I would like to take a moment to speak on the power of collaboration. For the past year, I have had the privilege of serving on the Mayor's Task Force Against Sexual and Domestic Violence – a multi-agency effort to identify opportunities for

- Nicole Revenaugh
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improvement in response, investigation, and prosecution of sexual and domestic violence in Topeka. One of the areas that the Task Force identified a need for assistance is with helping victims obtain protection from abuse/stalking orders while the criminal case against the alleged abuser is prosecuted. Unfortunately, these individuals often attempt to represent themselves and must confront their abusers in open court to try to obtain these orders. In other words, seeking a protection order can often put their safety at risk. After a quick email to our members a few months ago, I am proud to report we have more than ten WAAT members who are willing to receive more information, training, and potentially represent victims in their pursuit of protection from abuse/stalking orders. Kansas Legal Services also offered to conduct some of these trainings for our members. This is an amazing collaboration that involves WAAT, the YWCA, and Kansas Legal Services. It is wonderful to watch our community come together to serve an important cause. Let's keep collaborating!

Last but not least, I would like to encourage each of you to attend the upcoming Kansas Women Attorneys Association's Conference at Lindsborg from July 18-20. This year's "Camp Lindsborg" features keynote speaker Gretchen Rubin of *The Happiness Project*. Each year, this conference provides inspiration, encouragement, camaraderie, and, of course, excellent CLE programming. I hope that you will consider registering.

In partnership,

Nicole Revenaugh



RECENT HAPPENINGS

McFarland Award and Just Desserts

WAAT presented the 2019 Chief Justice Kay McFarland Attorney of Achievement Award to Natalie Haag at Just Desserts on May 30, 2019. The McFarland award is WAAT's highest honor and is given annually to an attorney who has achieved professional excellence in her field; influenced other women to pursue legal careers; opened doors for women lawyers in a variety of job settings that historically were closed to them; or advanced opportunities



for women within a practice area or segment of the profession. Natalie has served as Executive Vice President and General Counsel of Capitol Federal® Savings Bank since 2012 and has practiced law in a variety of settings for over 30 years. In addition to achieving success in her own right, she is constantly seeking to elevate women in the profession and our community. She frequently takes meetings with female attorneys who are contemplating career moves, advises women who are running for public office or striving for the bench, and finds women to serve on boards and committees in both bar and community organizations. Natalie doesn't just talk about moving the ball forward for women; she works hard to do that every single day. Please join us in congratulating Natalie and thanking her for all of the work she does to promote the advancement

of women in our profession!



WAAT would also like to thank everyone who helped make Just Desserts so successful. We grossed over \$6,000 at this year's event thanks to our event sponsors and everyone else who attended, made a donation, bought a ticket for the diamond pendant raffle, or purchased items in the silent auction. Part of the proceeds will be donated to the YWCA Center for Safety and Empowerment, which provides ser-

RECENT HAPPENINGS

vices to victims of domestic and sexual violence, stalking and human trafficking in northeast Kansas. The rest will go to the Washburn Women's Alliance Scholarship Fund. The Washburn Women's Alliance provides scholarships to undergraduate single parents enrolled at Washburn. WAAT's Just Desserts Chair Lisa Robertson deserves a huge round of applause for all of her hard work on this fantastic event!

Monthly Membership Meeting Recap

WAAT continues to provide high-quality programming on a monthly basis to its members and our broader legal community. If you are interested in presenting or have suggestions for programming you would like to see, please contact WAAT's Program Chair, Julia Holt.

Journeys to Motherhood, May 2019

In this panel discussion facilitated by Eunice Peters and Ivery Goldstein, four lawyer moms opened up about their paths to becoming parents and shared their perspectives on legal issues governing foster care, adoption, and infertility. This 1-hour CLE was co-sponsored by WAAT and the Kansas Women Attorneys Association. A similar presentation will be offered at KWAA's annual conference in Lindsborg, July 18-20.

Annual Meeting, June 2019

WAAT's annual meeting gave us an opportunity to reflect on everything our organization has done over the last year. We've learned how to be better lawyers through presentations on reducing bias, breaking unhealthy habits, and preparing for difficult work situations. We've given back to our community by making Constitution Day presentations in our schools; fundraising for the YWCA Center for Safety and Empowerment, the Washburn Women's Alliance, the Highland Park Parent-Child Learning Center, Harvesters, and Sertoma Clubs of Topeka; registering people to vote; and giving Informed Voter Project presentations. And we've gotten to know each other better through networking events like the business card exchange, wine social, and holiday party. The annual meeting was also a time to thank outgoing President Nicole Revenaugh for her leadership and elect the following members as officers for the 2019-2020 term: Amber Smith, President; Jen Cocking, President-Elect; Ashley Jarmer, Secretary; and Erin Beckerman, Treasurer.

GOOD NEWS

Share your good news with the group anytime by posting on the WAAT listserv or send your triumphs to the WAAT Board for publication in our quarterly newsletter. Let us share in your success and celebrate with you!

- **Deborah Barnes** recently joined the League of Kansas Municipalities as a staff attorney.
- The YWCA recognized WAAT members **Erin Beckerman, Sunee Mickle,** and **Sarah Morse** as Women of Excellence at its 31st annual Leadership Luncheon on June 18.
- **Jen Cocking** was appointed to a second term on the Kansas Continuing Legal Education Commission by the Kansas Supreme Court.
- The 3rd Judicial District Nominating Committee has nominated members **Lori Dougherty-Bichsel** and **Rachel Pickering** for the vacancy on the Shawnee County District Court created by the retirement of Judge Mark Braun. Lori is the Administrative Judge and Department Director for Topeka Municipal Court, and Rachel currently serves as Assistant Solicitor General in the Kansas Attorney General's Office.
- **Becky Sanders** was appointed to the Kansas Workers Compensation Appeals Board by Kansas Secretary of Labor Delia Garcia.
- **Cheryl Whelan** became Vice President of the Kansas Bar Association Board of Governors. She also chaired the planning committee for this year's incredibly fun and informative KBA Annual Meeting in Topeka.

WHAT'S HAPPENING NEXT

Watch your email for details on these upcoming events.

July **No Monthly Membership Meeting**
See you in Lindsborg!

July 18-20 **KWAA Annual Conference**
Bethany College, Lindsborg

August 21 **Monthly Membership Meeting**
Noon TBA

WAAT DIRECTOR SPOTLIGHT

Rachel Pickering

Assistant Solicitor General,
Kansas Attorney General's Office
WAAT KWAA Liaison



How long have you been in your current position? I have been with the Attorney General's Office since January 2018. In this capacity, I handle state criminal appeals, state and federal habeas cases.

What was your first job? My first job was at The Blodgett Lighthouse, a lighting store in Olivette, Missouri, where I worked in the warehouse.

What's the strangest thing you have on or in your desk? Unfortunately, I keep a very ordinary desk.

What's your favorite book? Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen.

We're entering the dog days of summer. Tell us about your pets! Last October we added a new member to the family, a soft-coated wheaten terrier. His name is Bennett, and is a very friendly puppy.

Becky Sanders

Board Member,
Kansas Workers Compensation Appeals Board
WAAT Nominations Chair



How long have you been in your current position? I was appointed in June to the Workers Compensation Appeals Board. This board hears and decides appeals from decisions from 10 workers compensation administrative law judges. There have been only two other women on the Appeals Board. Before my recent appointment, I was an administrative law judge hearing worker's compensation cases for 11 years.

What was your first job? My first job was at Smacks, which was a fast food franchise popular in the late '60s and '70s. Its signature dish was a Smackeroo—orange soda and soft serve ice cream. I did this in high school. The uniforms were orange with white aprons. The orange was like Cheetos orange.

What's the strangest thing you have on or in your desk? I have a green piece of glass in the shape of a mountain that I got at a conference I attended in West Virginia. It some artisan glass from that area.

What's your favorite book? My favorite book is Persuasion by Jane Austen, which is about second chances and being true to yourself. But running very close

WAAT DIRECTOR SPOTLIGHT

behind that is *To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee, *The World According to Garp* by John Irving, and *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott.

We're entering the dog days of summer. Tell us about your pets! I have no pets of my own, but I love dogs. I have a dog niece Paige who is a beautiful black standard poodle. My cousin has a golden doodle name Rockie that I am quite fond of. Bob and Ruth Alderson's border collies Zeva and Abby are favorites. Then my friends the Reicherts have had a series of dogs that are special. Scooby-doo, a 110-pound chocolate lab, was probably my favorite. He was a lap dog who did not like to retrieve.

Kelly Trussell

Of Counsel,

Sloan, Eisenbarth, Glassman, McEntire & Jarboe, LLC

WAAT Young Lawyer Chair



How long have you been in your current position? I

have been in private practice my whole legal career. I am with Sloan Law Firm, mainly practicing in litigation. I served as a Pro Tem Judge for Shawnee County District Court for 6 years, and have taught at Washburn Law School as an adjunct for 10 years.

What was your first job? My first job was working in my dad's dental practice. I think he wanted me to fall in love with dentistry, but that wasn't in my plan. Oddly enough, my oldest daughter (who never met my dad because he passed before she was born) is majoring in biology at Washburn this coming Fall, and dreams of going to dental school. I guess the ability to excel in math and science skips a generation?

What's the strangest thing you have on or in your desk? I have a collection of items that my Littles send with me to work: a pile of rocks, leaves, small sticks, acorns, and lots of colorful abstract and impressionist art.

What's your favorite book? The original Wizard of Oz series...I can't read them enough.

We're entering the dog days of summer. Tell us about your pets! We have a small zoo: A rescue dog that has completely forgotten about his past life; two rescue cats that weirdly tolerate dress up tea parties and baby doll strollers; a crested gecko named Steve (who we recently discovered is a girl) that loves my fruit smoothies; 17 fish that have somehow survived for years in our home; and a very large and spoiled horse that adores the kids and the buckets of treats they sneak to him.