Sacramento LAWYER

January/February
2014

SACRAMENTO
COUNTY BAR
ASSOCIATION
MAGAZINE

2014 SCBA President
B.J. Susich

SacLEGAL: First Annual Founders' Award Reception

SCBA Mentorship Committee Launches with Speed Networking Event

Photo by Mark Long, Eleakis & Elder Photography
www.sacbar.org

First Annual SacLEGAL Founders' Award Reception

By Katie Patterson

In October, SacLEGAL marked its first ever Founders' Award Reception. **Presiding Judge Laurie Earl** was honored for her contributions to the Sacramento legal community and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community.

This event was truly a celebration of how far we have come since the founding of SacLEGAL. The fact that SacLEGAL can openly and proudly give its Founders' Award to Presiding Judge Earl is a testament to the work of every member of the community over the past several decades. The actual founders of SacLEGAL, **Larry Levine** and **Eileen Gillis**, were able to be in attendance, and each was struck by how far we have come in their lifetimes.

In accepting the award, Judge Earl, introduced by **Judge Larry Brown**, drew much of her comments from the watershed gay rights case, *In re Marriage Cases* (2008) 43 Cal.4th 757. She noted that this case eloquently articulates *why* the separate institution of domestic partnership was discriminatory and how this separate institution inflicted real harm on the gay citizens of California. Her comments then turned celebratory. 2013 has been a seminal year in that both Proposition 8 and Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act were found to be unconstitutional.

It was striking to look into the crowd and to see the immense diversity of attendees who were there to support this inaugural event. It was a reminder of how very far LGBT rights have come since SacLEGAL was founded in 1995 -- when there was a very real fear amongst its members that if their membership was publicly disclosed, they would face a backlash from the Sacramento legal community.

SacLEGAL plans to hold a Founders' Reception annually to honor members of the Sacramento legal community for their contributions to the LGBT community, locally and beyond, in the hope of remembering the past discrimination and forging onward to fight for rights that have, so far, eluded our grasp.

Katie Patterson is a SacLEGAL Board Member.

Presiding Judge Laurie Earl with SacLEGAL Co-Chairs Katie Patterson and Mallory Lass

SacLEGAL Co-Founder Professor Larry Levine

SacLEGAL Board member Jo Michael, Allison Cross, SacLEGAL Board members Pam Jones, Katie Patterson, Mallory Lass, and Penny Brown

SacLEGAL Co-Founder Eileen Gillis

Judge Larry Brown

Eskaton Foundation Receives Donation from the Probate and Estate Planning Section.

By Donna Courville and Kim Rhinehelder

For the second year in a row, the Probate and Estate Planning Section has formed a charity committee to give back to our local community by selecting a non-profit organization for a cash donation. The charity committee members were **Donna Courville**, **Rebecca Gardner**, **Amy Halloran**, and **Mallory Lass**. The committee felt it was important to support seniors in our community. A $1,000 donation was presented to **Kim Rhinehelder** on behalf of the Eskaton Foundation to be used in the affordable housing programs.

2014 section officers Ellen Holloway (Treasurer), Susan C. Hill (Chair), Mallory Lass (Secretary), and Pam Jones (Vice Chair)

Did you know that, every 8 seconds in the U.S., someone turns 65, and this will continue every 8 seconds for the next 16 years? Closer to home in Sacramento, the number of people 65 years or older will increase by 172% by 2019.

Eskaton Foundation funds essential projects and innovative programs, in order to enhance the quality of life of seniors. Whether they are living in Eskaton communities, residing in affordable housing, or choosing to age in their own homes, the older adults served enjoy greater independence, dignity, and health.

Telephone Reassurance is just one program Eskaton Foundation supports. Each year, over 100,000 telephone calls are made to simply "check up" on seniors who are homebound and often isolated. Can you imagine the peace of mind you would feel if you knew your loved-one was being called every day?

Should you have questions about the services of Eskaton or Eskaton Foundation, please contact Kim Rhinehelder at 916/334-0810 or email at kim.rhinehelder@eskaton.org.

The members of the Probate and Estate Planning Section assist clients daily creating estate planning legacies for their families and favorite charitable organizations, as well as planning for the potential of future incapacity. These attorneys represent the most vulnerable individuals in matters relating to guardianships and conservatorships. The Probate and Estate Planning Section donation is just one more way to raise awareness and give back to the seniors in our community who are less fortunate.

Donna Courville is "of counsel" at Boutin Jones Inc. Kim Rhinehelder is Vice President, Philanthropy, at Eskaton Foundation.

VLSP *- Continued from page 28*

alongside some of the brightest legal minds in our community, and am eternally grateful for their dedication and support of our program.

Over the past 14 years, we have seen dramatic changes in demand for services at the Debt Collection Defense and Bankruptcy Clinic. We are currently seeing a swing away from individuals being good candidates for bankruptcy relief, and back toward needing advice on individual debts and collection efforts. We continue to be very busy, especially with our phone intake, receiving on average over 100 calls for debt related matters every month.

If you know of any low-income debtors that could benefit from a free consultation with an attorney regarding their debts, please refer them to the Debt Collection Defense and Bankruptcy Clinic at (916) 551-2123. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer at the Clinic or would like some more information about the Clinic or any other services VLSP provides, feel free to contact me at that same number or at htiffee@vlsp.org.