

Florida Association for Women Lawyers 2012 Leaders in the Law

The Florida Association for Women Lawyers (FAWL) established this designation in 2010 to recognize outstanding women lawyers across the state who have made significant impacts in their communities through their legal service and community activities.

FAWL's chapters nominated women who have earned the respect of others professionally, been involved in activities for the betterment of their local community, exemplified qualities of a positive role model, and advanced the cause of women in the community. The twenty-six women selected as a 2012 Leader in the Law are:



Elaine S. Lerner
*Central Florida Association for
Women Lawyers*

Elaine S. Lerner is the Senior Contracts Negotiator at Maple Street Inc. located in Longwood, Florida. Elaine served as CFAWL's Mentor Chair during 2011-2012, has been a CFAWL member since 2007 and is active with the Boys & Girls Club of Central Florida. Elaine is a licensed attorney in Florida and California and is an adjunct professor at Kaplan University and Valencia College.



Jamie Billotte Moses
Central Florida Association for Women Lawyers

Jamie Billotte Moses is a shareholder with Fisher, Rushmer in Orlando and focuses her practice in the areas of civil appeals and professional malpractice defense. Moses was recently elected Secretary of the Orange County Bar Association and is the immediate past president of the OCBA Legal Aid Society. She has been incredibly active in The Florida Bar having served as President of the Young Lawyers Division and a member of the Board of Governors of The Florida Bar. She is currently Chair of the Appellate Court Rules Committee.



Jacquelynne Regan
Central Florida Association for Women Lawyers

Jacquelyn Regan concentrates her legal practice on general litigation, commercial litigation and intellectual property. She counsels clients on an ongoing basis regarding business-related and corporate matters, with an emphasis on significant contract and intellectual property disputes. Regan holds a law degree from William & Mary School of Law.



LaShawnda Jackson
Central Florida Association for Women Lawyers

LaShawnda Jackson is a Partner with Rumberger, Kirk & Caldwell, P.A., where she has worked since graduating from the University of Florida College of Law. She practices in the areas of casualty defense, product liability and insurance coverage. LaShawnda defends individuals and companies against premises liability, product defect, motor vehicle accident and breach of warranty liability claims.



Meenakshi A. Hirani
Central Florida Association for Women Lawyers

Meenakshi A. Hirani practices law in the areas of Commercial Law, Civil Litigation, Real Estate Closings and issuing Title Policies, Probate, Guardianship and Estate Planning. She taught at Crummer Graduate School of Business as an adjunct professor for ten years and also has taught at FAMU. She graduated from Stetson College of Law, St. Petersburg.



Megan Malec
Central Florida Association for Women Lawyers

Megan Malec is an associate with N. Diane Holmes, P.A. Family Law Group and practices exclusively in the area of marital and family law. She served as CFAWL's Young Lawyers Director (2010-2012), chairing two projects serving domestic violence shelters. Malec will be serving as CFAWL's 2012-2013 Membership Director.



The Honorable Emily A. Peacock
Hillsborough Association for Women Lawyers

The Honorable Emily A. Peacock has served as a Circuit Court Judge in the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit, Hillsborough County, Florida, since her election to the bench in November 2006. Throughout her professional career, Judge Peacock has volunteered her time with numerous organizations in the Tampa Bay area, including serving on the HAWL Board for the past five years..



Karen Buesing
Hillsborough Association for Women Lawyers

Karen Buesing has counseled and represented management in employment law matters for nearly 30 years. She is Board Certified by The Florida Bar as a specialist in Labor & Employment Law. Not only is Ms. Buesing committed to the legal profession, but Ms. Buesing and her husband are also involved with assisting homeless youth to get back on track.



Dana Laganella Gerling
*Manatee County Florida Association
of Women Lawyers*

Dana Laganella Gerling practices in Estate Planning, Probate and Elder Law. She attended law school at Quinnipiac University School of Law in Hamden, Connecticut and graduated Cum Laude. She was President of the Manatee County FAWL for two years and has also served on the Board of Directors with the Sarasota County FAWL.



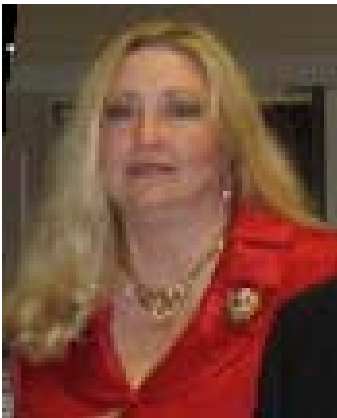
Marianne Howanitz
*Marion County Florida Association for
Women Lawyers*

Marianne Howanitz is a personal injury attorney and founder of Marianne Howanitz, P.A. in Ocala, Florida. Under her guidance and leadership as President of the Marion County FAWL for the past two years, Chapter membership has grown exponentially. They have offered a wide array of speakers and educational opportunities to the members and leadership.



Renee E. Thompson
*Marion County Florida Association
for Women Lawyers*

Renee E. Thompson is a senior associate in the Ocala office of Mateer & Harbert, P.A., practicing civil law, including collections and equine law. She currently serves as Vice Chair of The Florida Bar Hawkins' Commission for Review of the Discipline System.



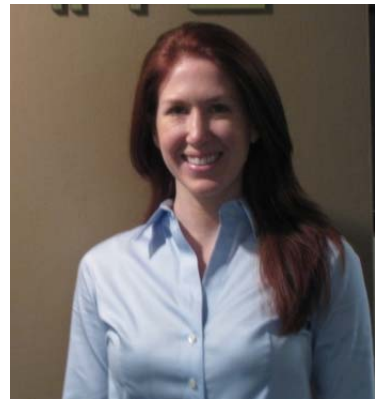
Vanessa Thomas
*Marion County Florida Association
for Women Lawyers*

Vanessa Thomas is a partner with Forman, Hanratty, Thomas & Montgomery in Ocala, Florida. She practices in the area of civil litigation with an emphasis in property rights, eminent domain, and ad valorem taxation.



Patricia A. Leonard
*Palm Beach County Association
for Women Lawyers*

Patricia A. Leonard has successfully handled numerous complex business and commercial litigation matters in state and federal courts, and in arbitration. Her broad experience includes matters involving breach of contract, employment discrimination defense, partnership and corporate disputes, trusts & estates disputes, legal malpractice matters, and real estate litigation.



Alexandra White
*Pinellas County Association for
Women Lawyers*

After graduating from Stetson University College of Law, Alexandra White joined the law firm of Wilson & Westerman PA. She takes pride in the fact that the firm empowers its partners to be legal leaders and creates a workplace that promotes maintaining a strong work/life balance.



Kristina Feher
Pinellas County Association of Women Lawyers

Kristina Feher is the managing member of Feher Law, PLLC. Kristina practices in the areas of bankruptcy, small business transactions, divorce, and immigration. Kristina received her B.S. in Criminology from Barry University and her law degree from Thomas M. Cooley Law School in Lansing, Michigan.



Kyleen Hudson
Pinellas County Association for Women Lawyers

Kyleen A. Hudson is an associate in McCumber Daniels' Tampa office. Ms. Hudson's practice focuses on professional and general liability, first party and insurance coverage, medical malpractice, and nursing homes defense. In 2010, she joined the PFAWL Chapter, where she currently serves as Vice President.



Mindy Stein
South Palm Beach County Association for Women Lawyers

Mindy Stein is an elder law, estate planning, and probate attorney at Mindy Stein, P.A. in Boca Raton, where she provides advocacy, guidance, and legal services to elderly and disabled individuals and families. She served as 2011-2012 President of South Palm Beach County FAWL.

Katelyn Knaak
Stetson University College of Law Student Chapter

Katelyn Knaak is an attorney for the Children's Legal Services division of the Florida Department of Children and Families. On top of her law practice, Katelyn makes time to volunteer in her community and mentor law students, both formally and informally. She volunteers with Junior League and began an innovative mentoring program at Stetson University College of Law titled "Shadow Team." Through "Shadow Team," Katelyn helps first-year law students get a head start on learning trial skills and gaining knowledge of the rules of evidence. In addition, Katelyn regularly volunteers to judge various formal and informal regional competitions for law students.



Gigi Rollini
Tallahassee Women Lawyers

Gigi Rollini practices in Holland & Knight's Litigation Group in Tallahassee, Fla., focusing on Florida appellate law, civil litigation, and administrative law. She served as FAWL President from 2010-2011 and Tallahassee Women Lawyers President from 2009-2010. She currently chairs FAWL's Member Advancement & Promotion (MAP) Committee.



Melanie Ann Hines
Tallahassee Women Lawyers

Melanie Hines, a partner in the Tallahassee office of Berger Singerman with over thirty years' experience practicing law, is an AV-rated attorney who has also been recognized in *The Best Lawyers in America*, Florida Trend Magazine's *Legal Elite*, and *Florida's Super Lawyers*.



Kathy J. Maus
Tallahassee Women Lawyers

Kathy J. Maus is a partner of Butler Pappas, active in the firm’s bad faith, casualty, and first and third party insurance coverage practices and is a Board Certified Civil Trial Lawyer. She is a Past President of the TWL. Maus has served as a panelist and speaker at numerous seminars on issues including casualty defense litigation, first and third party coverage issues and bad faith issues. .



Linda Bond Edwards
Tallahassee Women Lawyers

Linda Bond Edwards has been a partner at Rumberger, Kirk and Caldwell since 2006. While her professional career has been devoted to employment law, workplace related issues, she tries to use those skills to touch the lives of those that she encounters outside of the legal profession. She has been a believer in and a supporter of issues important to women and children.



Mary Ellen Clark
Tallahassee Women Lawyers

Mary Ellen Clark is an Assistant Attorney General, practicing in the Administrative Law Bureau of the Attorney General’s office for 9 years. Mary Ellen is active with The Florida Bar and, in addition to being Immediate Past Chair of the Government Lawyer Section, is a past president of the TWL and the Florida Government Bar Association.



Elizabeth “Beth” King
Volusia/Flagler Association for Women Lawyers

Beth King practices civil defense in Daytona Beach with the firm Smith, Schoder & Bledsoe. She holds a Bachelor’s degree in Theater from FSU and a J.D. from Florida Coastal School of Law. Prior to becoming an attorney, she taught Literature and Composition at Embry Riddle Aeronautical University.



Katherine Hurst Miller
Volusia/Flagler Association for Women Lawyers

Katherine Hurst Miller has an active civil litigation defense practice at the law firm of Cobb Cole in Daytona Beach. Katherine was the Vice President, President, and Immediate Past President of the Volusia Flagler FAWL, which expanded its programming under her leadership.



Sylvia Starbuck
Volusia/Flagler Association for Women Lawyers

Sylvia Starbuck uses her law degree to give a voice to those who are unable to speak for themselves. During her career, she has worked for Central Florida Legal Services and for the Domestic Abuse Council of Volusia County, where she currently provides free legal representation to victims and survivors of domestic abuse.