



**LAWYERS CLUB  
of San Diego**

ADVANCING THE STATUS OF WOMEN  
IN THE LAW AND SOCIETY SINCE 1972

# LAWYERS CLUB NEWS

September 2017

## Focus on Leadership

President's Message to Members

### Juggling, balancing or taming the lions of modern life?

By Olga Álvarez

As often as I answer the question, "how do I juggle and balance it all?" one would think that I had left my law practice and joined the circus. I am certain that every other working woman in the U.S. faces these questions as well. For those women who stay at home taking care of their children, they have my unwavering respect; I stayed at home for almost a year with my infant twins and that is the hardest job I have ever had, hands down.

For the longest time I searched to find balance. I went to panel after panel in pursuit of the key until I realized that it was my own value system that gave me the answer: What continues to guide my definition of balance may not be the solution for the next person. Therefore, in my humble opinion, one may achieve balance on most days by practicing self-reflection, prioritizing values and defining one's own vision of success. Time is something I will never get back, and many days I take a deep yoga breath, as I call it, and tell myself that I am doing the best I can with the

circumstances before me. Even as I write this article, I am visiting my family in Texas, sprinkled in glitter from helping my sister prepare for my niece's quinceañera.

This month's luncheon topic is family leave. The reality is that 43 percent of highly qualified women will leave the workforce to care for their children. But women don't only care for their kids. They are also the primary caregivers for

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*Olga Álvarez is co-founder and shareholder of Heisner Álvarez, APC in La Jolla. She is a Certified Legal Specialist in Estate Planning, Trust & Probate Law and is president of Lawyers Club.*

The Work-Life Balance Committee invites you to join Lawyers Club on September 28 for a luncheon entitled "Career Perspective on Taking Leave: the logistics and implications of taking a leave of absence or negotiating a flex schedule."

Many of us struggle to balance the various roles in our lives and to do justice to the different hats we wear during the course of any given day. Especially challenging is the transition to being a new parent or primary caregiver to elderly parents. These transitions may require us to go off-ramp from the workforce for some time or be on alternative work schedules. However, all too often, instead of taking time-off or negotiating flextime, we push ourselves to "do it all" or put our work before our families. Why? Is it because we are fearful of the negative impact time-off from our careers will have on our career progress, or our dedication to our profession? Is it because we don't know how to negotiate for time-off or flextime? Sheryl Sandberg, in her book *Lean In*, aptly writes, "I deeply understand the fear of appearing to be putting our families above our careers. Mothers don't want to be perceived as less dedicated to their jobs than men or women without family responsibilities."



Danielle Moore



Kristen Knepper



Patricia Hollenbeck

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**INSIDE**

Annual Dinner and Golf Tournament recaps,  
Fund for Justice Grantees and more!

The Work-Life Balance Committee symposium on September 28 will feature a diverse panel and perspectives focusing on an employee's rights to take leave in order to care for a child or family member, or for disability.

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"We overwork to overcompensate. Even in workplaces that offer reduced or flextime arrangements, people fear that reducing their hours will jeopardize their career prospects."

If you have struggled with the decision to take time off or negotiate for a flextime arrangement, we invite you to join Lawyers Club on September 28 at the annual balance symposium, sponsored by Sambold Law, Mediation & Arbitration, which will feature attorneys Danielle Moore, Kristen Knepper, and Patricia Hollenbeck in a three-part panel discussion about the right to take leave, how to negotiate leave, and a practical discussion on making the decision to take leave or request a flexible schedule.

Moore will present an overview of the benefits federal and state laws require employers to give to employees with respect to family leave, including maternity/paternity leave and other family leave (e.g., to take care of aging parents). Moore is a partner with Fisher & Phillips, LLP, and co-chairs the firm's Women's Initiative and Leadership Council. She represents and counsels employers in all aspects of labor and employment law, including employment discrimination, wrongful termination, and personnel policy preparation.

In the second portion of the panel discussion, Knepper will provide practical guidance for negotiating pregnancy benefits, family leave and flex schedules. Knepper is the founder of Kristen Knepper Consulting, and has over 15 years' experience in creating diverse, high-performing teams. Knepper's eclectic professional background includes national politics, having served the White House and two United States Senators; legal practice at an international firm; over 10 years of creating high-performing teams at a Fortune 500 technology company; and teaching law and human resources.



Danielle Moore



Kristen Knepper



Patricia Hollenbeck

Finally, Hollenbeck will tackle the question that often goes unasked – "Just because I can take leave, should I?" She will also discuss the steps that can be taken to address the negative impacts that taking time-off or requesting a flex schedule might have on career momentum. Hollenbeck is an experienced trial lawyer and a Partner at Duane Morris LLP. She is also a past President of Lawyers Club of San Diego and currently serves on the Board of the San Diego County Bar Association. In 2013, Hollenbeck received the Cheryl Blackwell Bryson Leadership Award, presented by the Duane Morris Women's Initiative. The award recognizes significant contributions to women in the profession, including issues of the professional development of women lawyers and the advancement of women lawyers in the profession.



Victoria Stairs and Priyanka Talukdar, co-chairs of the Work-Life Balance Committee.



LAWYERS CLUB  
of San Diego

## September Balance Symposium

September 28, 2017 | 12:00 - 1:15 PM

Register online at [Lawyersclubsandiego.com](http://Lawyersclubsandiego.com).