

# AdvanceSheet™

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## OWLS Honors Judge Tennyson, Elisa Dozono

By Adele Ridenour

On March 8, over 550 guests, including Governor Kate Brown and Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum, gathered at the Portland Art Museum to honor Elisa Dozono, a partner at Miller Nash Graham & Dunn, and Judge Katherine Tennyson, of the Multnomah County Circuit Court, with the 2019 OWLS Roberts & Deiz Award.<sup>1</sup>

Elisa Dozono is a native Oregonian and a 2006 graduate of Lewis & Clark Law School. At Miller Nash, Elisa specializes in litigation and governmental affairs work. She is also a volunteer pro tem judge on the Washington County Circuit Court. Prior to her legal career, Elisa spent 11 years working in the public arena, including work with the Port of Portland, former Portland Mayor Vera Katz's office, former Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber, the Clinton/Gore 96 campaign, and Channel 2 News. While at Miller Nash, she helped develop Oregon's first virtual pro bono clinic. Elisa is also the founder of both the Oregon Asian Pacific American Bar Association (OAPABA) and Emerge, a nonprofit organization dedicated to recruiting and training Democratic women candidates to run for local, state, and national office.



Top: Elisa Dozono, Governor Kate Brown  
Above: Governor Brown, Judge Katherine Tennyson, and her spouse, Katie Meyer

Judge Katherine E. Tennyson has served on the Multnomah County Circuit Court since 2002 and is currently its acting chief probate judge. Judge Tennyson began her career as an attorney in the 1980s. She is a former board member of OWLS and the founder of the OWLS Judicial Work Group, which helps recruit and prepare attorneys from outside the dominant culture to apply for state and federal judicial positions. She is also the founder of the OWLS First Generation Professionals Discussion Group, an informal monthly luncheon gathering of attorneys who are the first in their family to attend college or the first to become a lawyer.

After receiving her award, Elisa spoke passionately about the need for inclusive and meaningful representation. Elisa encouraged everyone to reach out to those who might be struggling to make their voices heard. On each table she left "Know Your Rights" cards from the ACLU, which were printed in both Spanish and English. She left cards for Emerge, in case any attorneys attending the dinner met a female colleague they wanted to encourage to run for office. And she left some

*Continued on page 8*

## Register Now: Time's Up Program on May 8

Register [online](#) for Time's Up Oregon: Reckoning with Sexual Harassment in Oregon's Legal Community, a program to take place on Wednesday, May 8, at the Benson Hotel in Portland, starting at noon (lunch included). Join colleagues from Oregon's affinity bar associations; the MBA Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee; and the Oregon State Bar Diversity & Inclusion Department as we take a much-needed look at the landscape of sexual harassment laws, acknowledge stories of harassment in Oregon's legal community, and learn how to interrupt harassment in the workplace. The keynote speaker will be Tina Tchen, co-founder of the Time's Up Legal Defense Fund and former chief of staff to former First Lady Michelle Obama. Presenters include Courtney Angeli, Dana Sullivan, and Amy Collins. [Reserve your seat](#) now! Scholarships are available. Email Linda at OWLS for details. Free to law students.



Reckoning with Sexual Harassment  
in Oregon's Legal Community



## Immediate Past President's Message



Amber Hollister

Spring is an optimistic season. Even ankle deep in the mud of my son's outdoor soccer games, I cannot help but look up at the slivers of blue sky and the crocuses

blooming along the edge of the pitch. Writing this message, I am also optimistic about the future of OWLS.

OWLS is on the front lines of the work to implement positive change in the legal community. Side by side with OHBA; OC-NBA; OAPABA; OMLA; OGALLA; the MBA Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee; and the OWLS Queen's Bench chapter, OWLS will highlight the #MeToo experiences within our own legal community, and the wisdom of speaker Tina Tchen, as a springboard for change. Tina Tchen is the former chief of staff to Michelle Obama and the former executive director of the White House Council on Women and Girls who spearheaded the Time's Up Legal Defense Fund. I hope you join OWLS on May 8 at the Benson Hotel for Time's Up Oregon: Reckoning with Sexual Harassment in Oregon's Legal Community to take part in this transformative event.

OWLS has doubled down on its commitment to inclusive feminism. At the board level, OWLS is engaging in regular conversations on topics of intersectionality, white fragility, tokenism, and unconscious bias. Over the next year, with the help of an experienced team of professionals at the Center for Equity and Inclusion, the entire board will take part in an intensive training on equity and inclusion so that we can further transform our organization. Externally, with the leadership of the OWLS IN Committee, we are working to strengthen our partnerships with leaders in the affinity bar community. As an organization, OWLS is committed to building a legal community in which we address systemic barriers to equity so that each one of us is welcome, included, and valued.

OWLS is continuing its work to break down barriers for lawyer parents. Recognizing that parenting is often perceived as a significant obstacle to professional success, OWLS formed the Working Parents Committee to support and advocate for lawyer parents. OWLS has successfully promoted the creation of additional lactation spaces for lawyer parents, and we recently approved our first Model Parental Leave Policy, designed to encourage law firms to adopt best practices to support lawyer parents. OWLS will continue to advocate for a legal community in which the desire to parent and build a family is fully embraced.

Perhaps most importantly, OWLS benefits from a team of strong leaders who are ready to take us forward. From our newest OWLS board members, to our seasoned executive director and staff, to OWLS committee leaders who recognize trends and energetically tackle new events and topics, OWLS is filled with leaders who time and time again accomplish great things. Each year, OWLS embraces change and innovates to address emerging challenges of modern law practice. Even after 30 years, OWLS is still crucial and celebrated by the Oregon legal community.

Standing before an audience of over 550 OWLS supporters at the Roberts & Deiz Award Dinner last month, I was awestruck by the power of this organization. Tables of distinguished legal community leaders, including judges, elected leaders, managing partners, law students, and business owners, enthusiastically affirmed the mission of OWLS. I have faith that OWLS will continue to harness that power for good to transform the practice of law in years to come.

Looking back over the past year, I am immensely grateful for the opportunity to have served as OWLS' president. Thank you for allowing me the chance to be a part of OWLS' story.

Amber Hollister  
Immediate Past President, OWLS

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*Our mission is to transform the practice of law and ensure justice and equality by advancing women and minorities in the legal profession.*

# Upcoming OWLS Events

## Selling Your Success During Annual Reviews

Presented by OWLS Leadership Com.  
Portland  
Thursday, April 11, noon–1:30 p.m.  
121 SW Morrison St., 2d-floor conf. rm.  
Register [online](#). Includes lunch.

## Preservation of Error: A Panel Presentation

Presented by Mary Leonard Chapter  
Salem  
April 15, noon–1 p.m.  
Marion County Courthouse,  
Jury Assembly Room (5th floor)  
Register [online](#).

## Contract Lawyers Discussion Group

Portland and via phone  
Friday, April 19, noon  
OWLS HQ  
121 SW Morrison St., 11th floor

## Skills and Strategies for Emerging Political Leaders

Presented by OWLS Leadership Com.  
Portland  
First Tuesdays, beginning in May  
Register [online](#). Includes lunch.

## Time's Up Oregon: Reckoning with Sexual Harassment in Oregon's Legal Community

Presented by the OSB D & I Dept.;  
the MBA Equity, Diversity & Inclusion  
Committee; and Oregon's Affinity Bar  
Associations

Portland  
Wednesday, May 8, noon–5:20 p.m.  
Keynote Speaker: Tina Tchen  
Presenters: Courtney Angeli,  
Dana Sullivan, Amy Collins  
The Benson Hotel  
Registration fee: \$60  
Incomes under \$60K: \$25  
Free to law students  
Scholarships available  
Register [online](#). Includes lunch.

## First Generation Professionals Discussion Group

Portland  
Friday, May 17  
Multnomah County Courthouse, #308  
RSVP to [OWLS](#). Lunch served.

## 2019 Salem Day Out for CourtCare

Presented by Mary Leonard Chapter  
Salem, at Taproot  
Saturday, June 1  
More info is [online](#).

## Fall CLE: Pay Equity

Portland  
Friday, October 18  
[Details on page 7.]

## Joan Seitz Law Society

Roseburg  
First Tuesdays, noon  
Daily Grind Café, 368 SE Jackson St.

## Josephine County Women Lawyers

Grants Pass  
First Wednesdays, noon  
La Burrita, 1501 NE F St.

## Lane County Women Lawyers Steering Committee

Eugene  
First Tuesdays, noon–1 p.m.  
Cafe Yumm on Broadway  
Contact: Kasia Mlynski

## Lawyers' Association of Washington County

Hillsboro  
Third Wednesdays, 8:30–9:30 a.m.  
Insomnia Coffee, 317 E Main St.

## Queen's Bench

Portland  
Second Tuesdays, 11:45 a.m.–1 p.m.  
Mark O. Hatfield U.S. Courthouse  
1000 SW Third Ave.  
Register on the Queen's Bench [website](#).  
Or watch via QB's Facebook page.

## 30th Anniversary Celebration and Legacy Society Launch

Sponsored by OWLS and the OWLS Foundation

Join us as we celebrate OWLS' 30th anniversary  
and the launch of the OWLS Foundation Legacy Society  
Thursday, July 11, 5 to 7 p.m., 100 SW Market St., Portland



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# Nominations Sought for OWLS Workplace Leader Award

## Nomination Deadline Is June 7, 2019

The practice of law often includes barriers to equitable advancement by lawyers from non-dominant cultures, and it does not typically reward or hold in high regard lawyers seeking a healthy, balanced life. The OWLS Workplace Leader Award seeks to encourage and celebrate change by legal employers that eliminates such barriers and embraces health and wellness, in both mind and body. Holding such workplace leaders as models for our community will result in a stronger profession and a better community for all of us.

While some legal employers agree in concept that these changes are needed, there may be many paths to achieve success. And it takes true leadership to incorporate such concepts into the legal employer's culture. Examples of concepts for seeking change include the following:

- What actions can legal employers take to attract and retain qualified women, people of color, and people from other marginalized communities, while honoring each individual's

skills and contributions and creating equitable promotions to leadership?

- What alternative work-flow configurations will maximize the experience, success, and satisfaction of all employees and create a more inclusive work culture?
- What flexibility will employers offer to employees who are parents or caregivers, or who have other important family and personal obligations or challenges, to avoid losing the momentum in their legal careers and to become resilient leaders in the profession?
- How can legal employers provide effective and reciprocal mentoring relationships?
- How are contributions to the organization that are not captured by the usual quantification tools (such as billable hours) being valued and promoted by leadership?
- How do the leaders of a legal employer instill a culture of raising awareness and embracing recovery for substance abuse, addiction, and/or

or mental health needs for all their employees?

- How are employers promoting pay equity for all employees, including women, people of color, and those from non-dominant communities?

### The Award

The Workplace Leader Award recognizes an Oregon legal employer making innovative and effective efforts to promote one or more of the following values:

- A healthy balance between work and personal life, to include a culture of awareness and recovery for substance abuse, addiction, and/or mental health needs.
- Acquiring and maintaining a diverse workforce with diverse leadership
- Maximizing opportunities for women, people of color, and people from other non-dominant communities to succeed in the workplace and advance to positions of influence and leadership

### We look for a specific program, policy, or project

The award will recognize a specific program, policy, or project that is successfully addressing one or more of the concepts and values outlined above. We welcome nominations from all legal employers, including legal nonprofit/advocacy organizations, in-house legal departments, government attorney employers, and private firms of any size.

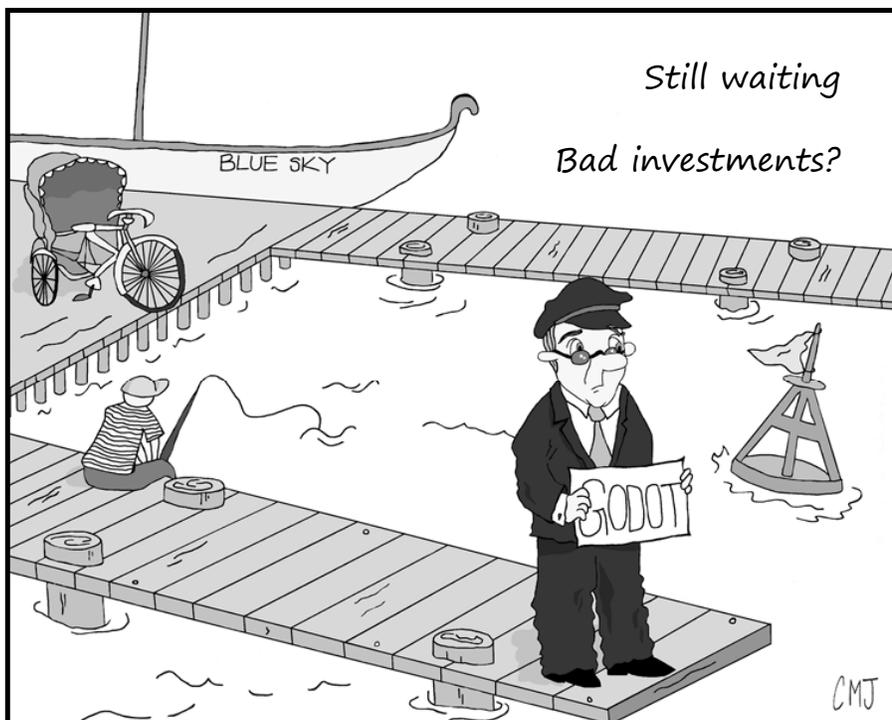
### Nomination Information

Nominations should include the following: information that will help the award committee evaluate the specific program, policy, or project of the employer; the markers of success for that program, policy, or project; and the names of people who can be contacted for further information. Please be sure to include copies of any policies, procedures, or other supporting documents.

Nominations must be received via email by 5:00 p.m. Friday, June 7, 2019. Please send them to Val Tomasi, OWLS Transformation Committee chair: [vtomasi@tomasilegal.com](mailto:vtomasi@tomasilegal.com).

The 2019 award recipient will be honored during the OWLS Fall CLE on Friday, October 18, in downtown Portland.

For more info, visit [www.oregonwomenlawyers.org](http://www.oregonwomenlawyers.org).



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Oregon's 80th Legislative Assembly kicked off on January 14 with opening ceremonies and organizational days, and hearings began the following week. It is expected to run through the end of June.

This session started with both legislative chambers in Democratic hands, with Democrats holding 38 seats in the House (Republicans hold 22 seats) and 18 seats in the Senate (Republicans hold 12), giving Democrats a supermajority in both chambers and a Democratic governor.

The session has been dominated by discussions regarding paid family leave, affordable housing, and cap and trade, as well as PERS liability and revenue reform. In the background, however, much of the attention has been on workplace harassment and the culture at the Capitol, as well as pay equity issues related to legislative staff. The first bills that the legislature passed included a Medicaid funding package for healthcare (HB 2010) and SB 608 to ensure access to affordable housing and limiting rent increases and no-cause evictions.

In early January, the Oregon State Bar Board of Governors adopted its 2019 Legislative Priorities and recommitted to advancing the bar's [2019 Law Improvement Package](#). The Oregon State Bar (OSB) looks forward to supporting its partners in the judicial branch in advocating for adequate funding for Oregon's court system, civil legal aid, and indigent defense, as well as supporting the bar's law improvement priorities.

In early March, the co-chairs of the legislature's Ways and Means Committee released their proposed budget, which is considered the starting point for the final budget package. The proposals call for a 5% reduction across state government, with the exception of healthcare and education. However, this translates into more than a 6% cut to the Oregon Judicial Department (OJD) operations, since certain constitutionally mandated functions (resulting in, for example, judicial salaries, payments for interpretive services, and juror payments) may not be reduced. The result is a disproportionately higher reduction to the rest of the courts' budget.

The co-chairs' proposed budget means further reductions in services to the public. Most of the OJD budget consists of pay for personnel who conduct court operations, so cuts to the OJD budget directly restrict access to justice. Due to the budget reductions that OJD sustained during the 2017–2019 biennium, the



By Susan E. Grabe

courts in Oregon are understaffed and unable to serve the public for the full business day. Courts have had to limit the amount of time staff spend answering phone lines and providing assistance at service windows, and many courts are now closed during the lunch hour, so that their staff can complete data entry, scheduling, posting notifications, and other necessary duties.

It is already taking longer to get judgments and orders processed and entered, which delays remedies for individuals and affects lives. Timeliness and public access will continue to deteriorate if funding is not restored. Further reductions, as proposed, will force courts to focus solely on constitutionally mandated functions, such as criminal trials, dependency, delinquency, and certain family law cases. As a

result, programs that are not mandated but are valued by the community, such as treatment courts and court facilitators to assist and provide guidance, will be eliminated.

Because of these threats to the court system, the OSB has reinvigorated its Citizens' Campaign for Court Funding. This campaign supports the statewide coalition of citizens and business and community groups formed to ensure adequate and stable court funding.

Fully funding Oregon's courts will allow the courts to meet service goals that have been unattainable for most of the last decade:

- Fill 80 staff positions that have been held vacant due to budget reductions.
- Create 14 new judicial positions in order to meet timeline standards for children in foster care and focus on families and dependency cases.
- Create 78 new staff positions to allow the courts to improve public access. This includes ensuring that staff are available to answer phones, that counters are open 8 hours a day, and that judgments are entered within 72 hours of their filing.

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## Capitol Update

For more information on how to participate in the Citizens' Campaign for Court Funding, go to <https://publicaffairs.osbar.org/court-funding/>. Also, please join us May 8 for the OSB's Day at the Capitol, where we will meet with our legislators to talk about funding for the courts, indigent defense, and low-income legal services.

### Court Facilities

A number of Oregon's existing courthouses are in desperate need of upgrade or replacement. Many are too small for the number of cases in their county, and even more do not meet modern standards for safety and security. Fully funded courts will allow the OJD to:

- Open the new Multnomah County Courthouse on time and begin construction of new facilities in Lane, Clackamas, Benton, and Linn Counties.
- Maintain minimum security standards in every courthouse and provide seismic protections and system upgrades for the Supreme Court Building.

### Judicial Salaries

Another important initiative in the OJD budget is a request to improve funding to ensure adequate judicial salaries. Oregon

circuit court judges currently rank 46th in the country in cost-adjusted salary. Offering competitive compensation for judges is critical to attracting the most qualified judicial applicants for the positions. OJD has proposed setting Oregon judicial salaries at a fixed percentage of federal judicial salaries to help eliminate the need to return to the legislature year after year to address this problem.

Cuts to court funding do not hit all court users evenly. As indicated above, the courts are constitutionally mandated to make certain payments (such as judicial salaries, payments for interpretive services, and payments to jurors), and the courts are required to handle many criminal cases ahead of civil cases in order to meet constitutional timeliness requirements. This can substantially delay many civil and family law cases and puts the staff that support them at risk.

### Indigent Defense

HB 3145 is a vehicle that will substantially restructure the way in which indigent defense services are provided in Oregon. This bill comes as a result of a report issued by the Sixth Amendment Center that identifies deficiencies in how services are provided. One recommen-

*continued from page 5*

dation in the report is to restructure service delivery so that the majority of trial-level public defenders are state employees working for a newly created state agency in the executive branch, rather than independent contractors, as is the case today.

### Other Bills of Interest

Although the bar submitted its own Law Improvement Package of bills this session, the Public Affairs Department is also closely following a number of proposed bills that directly apply to the practice of law or to a particular area of law of interest to many practitioners. A handful of those bills are listed below. To find out more about the bills that have been introduced this session, please see the bar's list of [Introduced Legislation by Area of Law](#) and visit the [OLIS](#) website.

To learn more about the OSB Public Affairs Department and the Law Improvement Program activities, please go to [www.osbar.org/pubaffairs](http://www.osbar.org/pubaffairs).

We encourage you to engage in the legislative process. To find out more about the bar process, please contact us at [pubaff@osbar.org](mailto:pubaff@osbar.org).

*Susan E. Grabe is the director of the Oregon State Bar Public Affairs Department.*

### House Bills

**HB 2014.** Restricts limitation on award of noneconomic damages to claims in actions for wrongful death.

**HB 2239.** Increases number of circuit court judges in certain judicial districts.

**HB 2241.** Authorizes chief justice of the Supreme Court to impose fees on public bodies for use of certain electronic court services.

**HB 2258.** Directs Office of Governor to conduct study of family treatment courts and to report results to interim committees of Legislative Assembly related to human services on or before September 15, 2020.

**HB 2614.** Repeals driving privilege suspension and eliminates imposition of driving privilege restrictions for failure to pay fine.

**HB 2615.** Repeals statutory authority for nonunanimous jury verdicts in criminal trials.

**HB 3388.** Modifies annual salaries of judges of Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, circuit courts and Oregon Tax Court.

**HJR 10.** Proposes amendment to Oregon Constitution to allow juries to impose verdicts in criminal cases only by unanimous agreement.

*Continued on page 7*



The Oregon Women Lawyers Foundation, the 501(c)(3) sister organization to OWLS, is proud to focus on educating and supporting women and minorities in order to further their access to and participation in the justice system.

We fund the **Armonica Law Student Book Grant**, the **Vernellia R. Randall Bar Exam Grant**, the **Justice Betty Roberts Leadership Conference Grant**, and the **Janis Hardman Medical Support Grant**.

Remember the OWLS Foundation and give a lasting legacy. Join the OWLF Legacy Society.

Visit [www.owlsfoundation.org/donations](http://www.owlsfoundation.org/donations)



## Rebecca Guptill Appointed to Bench

On February 18, Governor Kate Brown announced her appointment of Rebecca Guptill to the Washington County Circuit Court. Judge Guptill grew up in Waldport and earned her JD at Willamette University College of Law. She was a trial attorney at Harris Velázquez Gibbens, is a past president of the Washington County Bar Association, and chairs the Lawyers' Association of Washington County, an OWLS chapter. Congratulations, Judge Guptill.



Judge Rebecca Guptill

## Capitol Update

*continued from page 6*

### Senate Bills

**SB 318.** Creates rebuttable presumption that equal parenting time is in best interests of child.

**SB 371.** Establishes pilot programs for purpose of appointing legal counsel for children in contested domestic relations proceedings.

**SB 385.** Directs presiding judge of each judicial district to establish alternative dispute resolution conference procedure for custody and parenting time modifications and enforcement proceedings.

**SB 608.** Prohibits landlord from terminating month-to-month tenancy without cause after 12 months of occupancy.

**SB 684.** Specifies requirements for covered entities that own, license, maintain, store, manage, collect, process, acquire or otherwise possess personal information, and for vendors that provide services to covered entities, to notify consumers of breach of security.

**SB 728.** Includes insurance in definition of real estate, goods and services that are subject to penalties for unlawful trade practices.

**SB 736.** Modifies terminology in domestic relations proceedings regarding custody of and parenting time with children.

**SB 969.** Eliminates mandatory adult prosecution for certain offenses committed when person charged is 15, 16 or 17 years of age at time of offense.

## OWLS Fall CLE on Pay Equity & 30th Anniversary Celebration on Oct. 18

Join OWLS in Portland on Friday afternoon, October 18, for the annual OWLS Fall CLE, followed by a special celebration in honor of OWLS' 30th anniversary.

This year's CLE will focus on pay equity. We have made progress in the past 30 years, but we have more work to do. Maya Raghu, director of workplace equality and senior counsel to the National Women's Law Center, will open the program with a keynote address providing historical context, defining key concepts, and explaining efforts around the country in courts, legislatures, and companies.

Next, Laura Salerno Owens of Markowitz Herbold and Anne Milligan of the Portland City Attorney's Office will bring the focus to Oregon and share practical tips from their years of experience. Attendees will then break into small groups to engage in facilitated discussion of several topics, including knowing your worth and negotiating your pay. We want to hear your questions and concerns. Please email proposed questions and discussion topics to [OWLSCLE@gmail.com](mailto:OWLSCLE@gmail.com). Questions and topics will be used anonymously.

Immediately following the Fall CLE, OWLS will host a reception celebrating our 30th anniversary. We hope that you can stay to connect with friends and join in the fun. For more information, please email [linda@oregonwomenlawyers.org](mailto:linda@oregonwomenlawyers.org).



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## Roberts & Deiz Award Dinner *continued from page 1*

Enjoying the event, at right (from left): Mohammed Workicho, Hon. Stacie Beckerman, Colleen Munoz



At right (from left): Caprese Siler, Kelly Giampa, Jane Paulson, Alexis Andersen



Below (from left): Amber Hollister, Jill Brittle, Karen Nashiwa, Kristin Asai



Photos here and on page 1: Mike Reynolds, Dreams in Bloom Photography

coupons for the Sisters of the Road Café, a nonprofit café located in Portland's Old Town/Chinatown that works to create systemic change that will end poverty and homelessness by providing nourishing meals in a safe, dignified space. Elisa encouraged everyone to invite the next homeless person they encounter to share a meal there.

For her part, Judge Tennyson spoke about her unconventional path to the bench, noting that others' paths would be different. Judge Tennyson emphasized the importance of finding one's own path and seeking help when you need it. She encouraged everyone to do what makes them happy, even if that includes watching television after work. She also reflected on the various helpers she has had in her own life, including her niece.

As part of the dinner program, the OWLS Foundation held a fundraising appeal and raffle that garnered over \$55,000 in funding to support OWLS Foundation grants. These funds will be used to provide scholarships and other financial assistance to law students outside the dominant culture. Thank you to all who donated.

It was a wonderful event, and on behalf of the entire OWLS Roberts & Deiz Award Dinner Committee, I'd like to thank all those who attended. We look forward to seeing everyone again at the dinner next year, on March 13.

**Adele Ridenour**, a partner in the Portland office of Ball Janik, co-chaired the 2019 Roberts & Deiz Award Dinner Committee.

1. The OWLS Roberts & Deiz Award honors the legacies of both Justice Betty Roberts (1923–2011) and Judge Mercedes Deiz (1917–2005) as promoters of those from outside the dominant culture, including women, people of color, members of the LGBTQ community, and people with disabilities. Justice Roberts was a leader in Oregon politics, the first woman to serve on the Oregon appellate bench, and a beloved mentor and advocate to women lawyers. Judge Deiz was a trailblazer in our legal community, as the first Black woman admitted to the Oregon State Bar and the first woman of color on the Oregon bench. She overcame racial bias throughout her career and created opportunities for those who might otherwise have been marginalized by society to access careers and legal resources.

### Thank You

#### 2019 Roberts & Deiz Award Dinner Sponsors

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# 30 Years Ago, When OWLS Was Formed

By Diane Rynerson

To understand the role that Oregon Women Lawyers has played for the past 30 years in the Oregon legal community, it is important to look at that community 30 years ago. When OWLS was incorporated in April 1989, Oregon didn't have any other statewide affinity bar associations. There was no Diversity Story Wall at the Oregon State Bar headquarters. There had never been a female president of the Oregon State Bar. Indeed, there had been only three women lawyers on the OSB Board of Governors, and never more than one at any given time.

No woman had chaired the OSB Professional Liability Fund. Only one woman, Betty Roberts, had ever received the OSB's highest award, the Award of Merit, which she shared with John Warden in 1987. There had never been a woman judge in many Oregon counties. Mercedes Deiz, the first woman of color to be admitted to practice in Oregon, was the sole female judge of color in Oregon 30 years ago. District Court Judge Aaron Brown was the only male judge of color.

Despite the lack of much visible progress in 1989, there was tremendous energy and desire to make a difference. Women and minorities had been entering law school in ever-increasing numbers since the 1970s. By the late 1980s, 34% of new Oregon lawyers were female.

The early success of Oregon Women Lawyers was the result of the collaboration of the new lawyers with the more experienced lawyers who served as mentors and guides to what needed to be done, creating the highest possible profile for the organization. The largest portion of the budget went to publication of the *AdvanceSheet*, which was distributed widely, including to public libraries. To the extent possible, the *AdvanceSheet* went to all judges and all women lawyers. (The latter goal was made more difficult because the Oregon State Bar hadn't tracked bar membership by gender.) Distribution of the first membership directory in spring 1990 followed the same pattern.

Specific goals, such as increasing the numbers of women and minorities on the bench, making the practice of law more family friendly, enhancing women's trial skills, and increasing the recognition and visibility of women and minorities in the legal profession, were addressed by mentoring, educational programs, and advocacy, done both publicly and



At a 1991 OWLS board meeting in Katherine O'Neil's home (from left): Left: Agnes Petersen, Armonica Gilford; Below: Kathleen Cushing, Barrie Herbold, Kathy Root, Kathryn Olney.



behind the scenes. This approach led to immediate results. Now, at 30 years of age, Oregon Women Lawyers is one of the nation's newer statewide women's bar groups, but it is also one of the 10 largest, giving us the strength to continue

to make a difference in Oregon's legal community.

In 1990, **Diane Rynerson** became OWLS' first executive director. She is currently the executive director of the National Conference of Women's Bar Associations.

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WHERE RELATIONSHIPS RULE

Recently, I put my name in for a seat on the Oregon Supreme Court to fill an opening that would result from the retirement of one of two men then sitting on the seven-person court. Consequently, I had the opportunity to be asked the question, rather often, whether I thought it possible that Oregon would be the first state to seat an all-women state supreme court. I answered, “No.” Not because we were not on the cusp of that possibility if I or another woman applicant was appointed. Rather, because another state has already done it. “Washington?” was the inevitable follow-up query. No, not Washington. “California?” No, not even that progressive state has had an all-female high court. It was Texas, and it was nearly 100 years ago, in 1925.

As you might expect, this all-women state supreme court did not occur organically. This unique scenario resulted when a case arose in which all the then-members of the Texas Supreme Court recused themselves because they were members of a party in the suit, the fraternal organization Woodmen of the World (WOW).

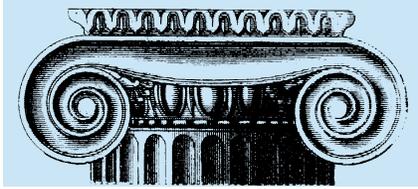
As a result, Governor Pat Morris Neff was required to appoint special justices to hear the case. During the following 10 months, he attempted to do so. However, each time he offered an appointment to a male judge or attorney, the response was that he, too, was a member of WOW and therefore disqualified from serving.

One week before the case was scheduled to be heard, the governor, himself an attorney, had an novel idea: Appoint women, as women were not permitted to be members of WOW. That the governor considered the possibility was not surprising, as he had already begun implementing a policy of appointing one or more women to all state boards and commissions. “I am in hopes that this recognition of the womanhood of the State as attorneys will be helpful in many ways to those women, wherever they may be, who are fighting single-handed the battles of life,” Governor Neff wrote in a letter about the all-women court.

Although the legality of appointing women was questioned by some, the only eligibility requirements under Texas law for appointment to the court were that the person be at least 30 years old and have practiced law in Texas for a minimum of seven years.

The women initially appointed were Nellie Gray Robertson of Granbury, the county attorney of Hood County, who was initially designated as special chief justice; Associate Justice Edith E. Wilmans of Dallas, who had been a member of

## THE JUDGES' FORUM



Judge Beth A. Allen  
Multnomah County Circuit Court

the 38th Texas Legislature; and Associate Justice Hortense Sparks Ward of Houston, an attorney in practice with her husband. However, Justices Robertson and Wilmans had to resign because they fell short of the required seven years' practice. Two more women were then appointed, Dallas lawyer Hattie Leah Henenberg and Ruth Virginia Brazzila. Justice Ward then was elevated to special chief justice, and the three resolved the case, *Johnson v. Darr*, 114 Tex. 516 (1925).

The specially comprised bench lasted about five months. During that time the male members of the Texas Supreme Court continued conducting the other business of the court. One reporter noted the women's court was “no freak affair, but a tribunal thoroughly competent to sit in judgment and reach a conclusion just as sound as a decision might have been made with all the Mr.'s since Adam stacked behind it.”

Not surprisingly, there was also gratuitous commentary on the female justices' appearances, with a reporter in 1925 noting the women “were a good deal better looking than the Supreme Court which regularly deliberates on the third floor of the capitol.” That quote was reported in a 2017 article about the all-female court. The reporter of the 2017 article ironically added, referring to a portrait of the women that was published with the article: “[T]he three women look at ease sitting behind [sic] on the bench. Ward wears a string of pearls.”

Notwithstanding the irrelevant focus on looks and gender, all five women were quite the trailblazers otherwise, as well. For example, Ward was the first woman in Texas to pass the state bar exam (1910), and she was the first Texas woman admitted to practice before the U.S. Supreme Court (1915). Ward is said to have drafted Texas's suffrage bill, which passed the Texas Legislature in 1918, and she was the first woman in the history of Harris County to register to vote. She also was an outspoken critic of laws that gave men complete control over their wives' prop-

erty. With her leadership, Texas passed the Married Woman's Property Rights Law in 1913, allowing women to manage their own property. Although Ward continued practicing law after her short-lived appointment to the Texas Supreme Court, she never appeared with a client in a courtroom, for fear her gender would prejudice her clients.

Although Texas had the first all-female highest state court in the nation, Texas women lawyers had to wait until 1982 before the next female justice was appointed to that court. And since then, only seven more women have served on the Texas Supreme Court. And while currently women make up half of all law students nationwide, less than one-third of all state judges are women, according to the *Gavel Gap*, a report from the American Constitution Society.

On a personal note, a very interesting distinction revealed itself to me as the possibility of an all-female Oregon Supreme Court was being discussed. Nearly every woman lawyer who considered the prospect thought it appropriate, should the female contenders be the best qualified for the spots, and all noted that such an occasion would rightfully turn the tables on centuries of exclusively male appellate benches. Most male lawyers, however, focused on the political risk to the governor if she took such a gamble, presumably even if the most qualified applicants for the next two openings were women. Few men thought that appointing two more women would be perceived as fair.

Although the men may be right, I'm not prepared to concede that point. And I'm in good company when you consider U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg's statement on when there will be enough women on the U.S. Supreme Court: when there are nine.

I hope that someday there will again be a state's highest court that is composed of only women—maybe our own. But now you know it won't be the first.

Author's note: Much of the information for this story comes from Alice G. McAfee's article “The All-Woman Texas Supreme Court: The History Behind a Brief Moment on the Bench,” 39 *St. Mary's Law Journal* 467 (2008).



Judge Beth A. Allen

# Meet Lane County Circuit Court Judge Debra Velure

By Joslyn Keating

As Debra Velure perused a Disneyland gift shop in mid-August 2018, the “happiest place on Earth” got a little happier. She received a phone call that she had long anticipated. The caller ID displayed “Salem,” so she answered. She was met by a cheerful voice announcing, “Hi. This is Kate.” It was Governor Kate Brown calling about the position on the Lane County Circuit Court left vacant by retiring Judge Karsten Rasmussen. Less than a week later, Judge Velure was sworn in as a Lane County Circuit Court judge. In November’s general election, she ran unopposed and secured the position for a full six-year term.

During the 1970s and 1980s, Judge Velure grew up on a small farm in McMinnville. She looked after sheep and pigs and participated in 4-H and Future Farmers of America. She also joined her high school debate team and participated in productions at a local community theater. Through these experiences, Judge Velure developed leadership and public speaking skills. Encouraged by her father’s 25-year career in the U.S. Navy, she also developed a keen interest in serving the public.

After high school, Judge Velure attended Oregon State University on an agriculture scholarship. She graduated in 1989, but had not yet committed to a career path. Her father lamented that she had become listless—staying out too late and neglecting her chores. During one argument, he lovingly suggested that she put her arguing skills to use and become a lawyer. The suggestion stuck, and Judge Velure began law school at the University of Oregon, graduating in 1993. After law school, she clerked for Lane County Circuit Court Judge Pierre Van Rysselberghe for a year. It was during this clerkship that Judge Velure first developed an interest in becoming a judge.

The clerkship that Judge Velure had with Judge Van Rysselberghe also taught her the value of formal and informal mentoring relationships. Over the span of Judge Velure’s 25-year legal career, Judge Van Rysselberghe has mentored her and taken an active role in several of her major life events. He swore her in to the Oregon State Bar, officiated at her marriage ceremony, presided over her son’s adoption ceremony, and swore her in as a judge. Appreciating the value of this mentoring relationship, Judge

Velure makes a concerted effort to pay it forward and mentor other attorneys, particularly female attorneys and those from underrepresented cultures.

She has also focused on attorney outreach in other ways. In 2000–2001, she served as the OWLS president. During that time, she spearheaded a judicial endorsement program involving a nationwide survey and candidate interviews. She also supported the effort to expand OWLS statewide and be more inclusive of local chapters.

After clerking for Judge Van Rysselberghe, Judge Velure spent the next 24 years working primarily as a litigation attorney in Eugene and Portland, purposefully gaining trial experience that would prepare her for a judgeship. She recalls that early in her career, it was “special” to be a female attorney in Lane County, as male attorneys vastly outnumbered female attorneys. A group of Judge Velure’s contemporaries set out to change that. They strived not to “be like the boys,” but to be excellent, and they succeeded. Judge Velure has observed the fruits of their labor in the current



makeup of attorneys in Lane County. The Lane County Circuit Court also features a majority-women bench, with nine out of 15 judges being women.

When asked for words of advice to newer attorneys, Judge Velure offered this: “You only have one reputation.” She urges attorneys to filter everything they do through the consequences of their actions. On her part, Judge Velure aims to be the type of person with whom you would want to have coffee.

*Joslyn Keating is an attorney for Cummins Goodman Denley & Vickers in Newberg. She represents employers and businesses.*

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# Thank You, Outgoing OWLS Board Members



Amber Hollister



Megan Burgess



Aruna Masih



Val Tomasi

The OWLS Board of Directors expresses its gratitude to four outgoing board members: OWLS Immediate Past President Amber Hollister, OWLS Treasurer Megan Burgess, Aruna Masih, and Val Tomasi.

Amber joined the board in May 2011. She has just concluded her term as OWLS' president. She had previously served as vice president, treasurer, and historian. During her board service, Amber chaired the Nominations Committee and the Finance Committee, co-chaired the Awards Committee and the Roberts & Deiz Award Dinner Committee, founded the Working Parents Committee (on which she still serves), and chaired the 2018 Fall CLE Committee, highlighting and educating about the Oregon refugee experience.

Megan Burgess joined the board in May 2010 and has served as treasurer for the past two years. She chaired the Finance Committee, co-chaired the Membership Committee, and continues to serve on the Membership and Working Parents Committees.

Aruna Masih joined the board in May 2014. She served on the Nominating Committee and continues to serve on the Transformation and OWLS IN Committees. She is also serving as a coalition member planning the Time's Up Oregon program that will take place on May 8 in Portland.

Valerie Tomasi joined the board in May 2013. She chairs the Transformation Committee and serves on the Leadership and 2019 Fall CLE Committees. She has also served as a panelist for several OWLS events.



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## OWLS Member Connie Jarvis Has Died

By Carol Macbeth

OWLS member Constance "Connie" Jarvis passed away on January 4 at the age of 88. Connie grew up in Portland and graduated from Grant High School, Whitman College, and the University of Washington School of Law. She was admitted to the bar in 1956, joined the family law practice of the late Bernice Johnson, and practiced law in Seattle, where she met her late husband, Jack Jarvis, with whom she moved back to Portland in the 1960s.

Connie practiced family law for decades in Portland, as the head of her own law firm, and argued numerous family law cases before the Oregon Supreme Court.

After retiring to Bend in 1996, Connie was a family law mediator for the Oregon Court of Appeals and regularly attended the Bend Inns of Court. She traveled each summer to study literature and history at the University of Cambridge. Her friends will treasure her memory always.



*Carol Macbeth is a staff attorney for Central Oregon LandWatch in Bend.*

# Doing Well by Doing Good: The Commons Law Center

By Adrian Brown

Like most attorneys in private practice, Kate Kilberg and Kimberly Pray, founding partners of Catalyst Law in Portland, had to turn away potential clients who could not afford their market-rate legal services. Those Oregonians likely did not qualify for legal aid either. This is the legal services gap—the space between Oregonians who make up to 125% of the federal poverty index, and therefore qualify for legal aid, and the few who can afford Portland’s median \$300-per-hour legal fees.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, a recent study measuring the civil legal needs of low-income Oregonians concluded that about 84% of persons surveyed with legal issues did not receive legal help of any kind.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, even if an individual does qualify for legal aid, there is no guarantee that a lawyer will be available. The same study also concluded that for every 14,000 poor people in Oregon, there are only two legal aid lawyers. The national standard set by the American Bar Association is two legal aid lawyers for every 10,000 poor people. The Oregon Bar Futures Task Force put the number of un- or under-lawyered Oregonians at 1.2 million people annually.<sup>3</sup>

Kate and Kimberly had founded their private law firm with the vision of creating a practice that focused on promoting social change and sustainable communities. The legal services gap was not something they could walk away from; instead, they looked for a way to build a bridge. With their mantra “do well by doing good,” they launched the Commons Law Center (CLC), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit law firm, in 2016. The mission: to revolutionize access to basic legal services, education, and support for underserved Oregonians by offering sliding-scale legal services to income-qualified people. And, in the process of that work, the nonprofit firm provides robust practical training for law students and new lawyers.

The CLC is truly a rising star in filling the legal services gap, due to Kate and Kimberly’s vision, as well as Amanda Caffall, the CLC’s executive director. The CLC provides sliding-scale legal services to modest-means clients and thus serves as a complement to pure pro bono

*Continued on page 16*

# Oregon Innocence Project at QB

By Anne Milligan

Queen’s Bench (QB), the Multnomah County chapter of Oregon Women Lawyers, hosted its monthly networking lunch and CLE on Feb. 12 at the federal courthouse in Portland. The theme of QB’s 2019 lunch series is “Crime and Punishment in Oregon.” Over 30 people attended the event, which featured Steve Wax, legal director of the Oregon Innocence Project (OIP), and Brittney Plesser, OIP staff attorney.

The OIP was launched in 2014 as a project administered by the Oregon Justice Resource Center. With a paid, in-house staff of just two attorneys, the OIP provides pro bono legal assistance to Oregon inmates who assert factual innocence, when there is the possibility of proving innocence. There are over 14,000 people incarcerated in Oregon, and hundreds of men and women have written to the OIP with claims of innocence.

Brittney, who previously worked for the California Innocence Project, noted that every state’s criminal justice system is vulnerable to the issue of wrongful convictions as a result of poor witness memory, mistaken eyewitness identification, false or coerced confessions, withheld exculpatory evidence, and invalidated forensic science.

Steve discussed the OIP’s September 2018 exoneration of Josh Horner, who was accused of child sex abuse and ultimately sentenced to 50 years in prison. Mr. Horner’s exoneration was the first obtained by the OIP. His full story can be read [here](#).

Queen’s Bench lunch CLEs take place the second Tuesday of every month at the federal courthouse in Portland; lunch reservations can be made at our website. Keep up to date with Queen’s Bench and watch our lunches captured via FacebookLive any time by liking our Facebook Page.

*Anne Milligan is a deputy city attorney at the City of Portland and president-elect of QB.*



*Brittney Plesser, Steve Wax*



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# OWLS and Friends Celebrate Diversity on the Bench

By Rebecca Ivanoff

Photo: Nina Johnson Photography



The judges honored at the reception were (seated, from left) Hon. Mustafa Kasubhai, Hon. Rafael Caso, Hon. Melvin Oden-Orr, Hon. Andrew Lavin, Hon. Adrienne Nelson, and (not in photo) Hon. Raymond Crutchley and Hon. Jolie Russo.

The student presenters were (standing, from left) Lauren Lewis, Cristela Delgado Daniel, Amanda Haines, Demetrius Johnson, Jon Harlan, and Jessica Gutierrez. Hon. Julia Philbrook (right) served as MC.

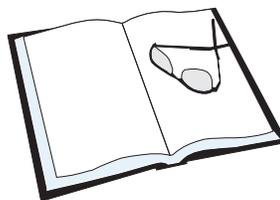
**O**n February 8, the OSB Diversity Section, OWLS, and the Lewis & Clark chapter of the American Constitution Society hosted a two-hour CLE and reception celebrating diversity on the Oregon bench. Panelists included law professors and diverse judges from across the state, who shared personal accounts of their journeys to the bench and insights into the importance of enhanced diversity among the judiciary. Despite progress in recent years, there is still more work to be done to ensure that Oregon's bench reflects the diversity of the bar and community.

Want to help? Mentor diverse attorneys and law students. Discuss a career path that includes judicial service, and normalize the vision of that service. Then, encourage talented, diverse lawyers to apply for open seats. The appointment process is a challenging one. Be there to offer support for diverse candidates during and after the process, regardless of the outcome. We each have a part to play in diversifying our judiciary, and these small investments can yield big returns.

## So You Want to Talk about Race

By Ijeoma Oluo  
(Seal Press, 2018, 256 pages)

Book Review by Bridget Budbill



**I**jeoma Oluo's 2018 book, *So You Want to Talk about Race*, conveys two essential lessons: (1) how to have complicated conversations about race and (2) why learning to do so is critically important. Oluo tackles the subject matter head-on, dedicating chapters to issues such as "What if I talk about race wrong?" "Why am I always being told to check my privilege?" and "I just got called racist, what do I do now?"

White readers, like me, may find Oluo's thorough examination of the facets of and relationship between privilege and racism helpful in better understanding the insidious, corrosive properties of both. Oluo carefully maps out why and how even the most well-intentioned people hold and act on racist beliefs, even without recognizing that they hold such beliefs and without any perceived malice toward others.

Importantly, Oluo explains that an individual's intent is irrelevant in calculating the social harms of racism because, among other reasons, the harms suffered by both an individual person and communities of color are the same, intended or not, and these harms are cumulative. To illustrate the cumulative nature felt by people of color experiencing intentional

and unintentional racist acts, Oluo uses the example of being punched in the arm, over and over again, in the same place. Though the first three punches may have been unintended bumps—for example, swinging one's arm too freely while on a bus and hitting someone—the fourth intended as a "joke," and only the fifth an intentional punch, all five punches impacted the person absorbing them.

People of color may find Oluo's suggestions for how to address overt and subtle, intentional and unintentional racism helpful, particularly regarding how to challenge racist behaviors constructively and how to unpack the aggregate effects of living through racist incidents time and time again.

In explaining to readers the difficulty of learning to talk about issues of race, Oluo is candid. "You're going to screw this up royally. More than once," she writes. To that end, her basic tips for people (especially people with racial privilege) who seek to have constructive conversations about race include stating your intentions; asking yourself whether you're trying to be right or trying to be better; and, if you start to feel defensive, stopping to ask yourself why you feel that way.

Oluo also notes that "even with all of your practice and with the best of your intentions, there will be times when all of this goes to shit." What should you do when conversations about race, indeed, go "to shit"? Oluo suggests, among other things, that you not insist on being given credit for your intentions and, of course, that you apologize.

Oluo also freely acknowledges that some readers will chuck her book out the window when confronted by some of her conclusions. She challenges those readers to continue on, noting, "Every day you are given opportunities to make the world better, by making yourself a little uncomfortable and asking 'who doesn't have this same freedom or opportunity that I'm enjoying now?'"

Perhaps one of the strongest elements of Oluo's writing is its earnest accessibility, laced with both wrenching personal anecdotes and occasional humor. In encouraging readers to tackle discussions of race, she reminds us that "[t]hese conversations will always be hard, because they will always be about the hurt and pain of real people."

**Bridget Budbill** is a program analyst at the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission.

# A Week in Tijuana with Al Otro Lado

By Kathryn Olney

The Uber driver picked up me and my travel companion, an immigration lawyer from Massachusetts whom I had met on a Facebook page for volunteers, and drove us to downtown Tijuana on a Monday morning. On the way, he pointed out an empty lot crowded with camping tents. “Los Hondureños.” Perhaps we had heard of them? We were noncommittal; we’d been told that the permanent residents of Tijuana didn’t like the migrant caravan, and we were trying to keep our purpose there vague.

Who hasn’t heard of “the caravan”? It consists of Hondurans, yes, but also Guatemalans, Mexicans, and El Salvadorans. It’s been the focus of attention since September 2018, as a political talking point, as the latest data point in a slow-motion humanitarian crisis, and as a focus of the OWLS Special Subcommittee on Family Separation. I’m not an immigration lawyer, but I’d been steeping myself in the immigration crisis for most of 2018, looking for a way that a non-Spanish-speaking insurance defense attorney could help, and not get in the way.

The caravan was not the first wave of migrants to come to Tijuana, not by a long shot. The city is the busiest land border crossing for those seeking asylum in the world. But the caravan brought a new swell of people into town, and both the U.S. and Mexican governments had reasons to try to make political hay from their presence. Thus, the usual process of asylum seeking was being deliberately slowed, and with nowhere to go, the migrants were filling shelters and empty lots.

Al Otro Lado (“The Other Side” in Spanish) has been working in Tijuana since 2012, first as an informal alliance between two attorney friends, one working in California, the other in Tijuana. Since then it has grown into a 501(c)(3) non-profit run mostly by a group of volunteers who collaborate on preparing people for their “credible fear interviews,” as well as working on cases to get U Visas, on bond hearings to get people out of detention, and to assist families with aspects of reunification in Mexico.

In November, with the caravan moving into Tijuana, Al Otro Lado put out a new call for volunteers. They needed immigration lawyers and Spanish speakers, but also people speaking other languages and people willing to help with orga-

nizational efforts and legal observing. Their needs were so great that I would be able to help. I signed up, for the first week in January 2019.

My application to volunteer was accepted, and my instructions came: one sheet, two sides. I was advised on how to arrive in Tijuana (walk over the border from the outlet mall, and get an Uber), where to stay (in an Airbnb), and when to show up (Monday, 10 a.m.). Beyond that, there was no information; they were busy triaging on the ground and couldn’t answer questions about what things would look like weeks in the future. So I signed up for the Facebook page, cold-called a couple of people who posted there about their experiences, found my new best friend from Massachusetts, and went.

Monday morning, Love and I showed up at Enclave Caracol, a four-story concrete building in central Tijuana. On the bottom floor is a vegan soup kitchen run by Food Not Bombs. A rotating group of medical personnel run a clinic for migrants on the second floor, which also houses the Enclave members. On



the third and fourth floors, Al Otro Lado provides its services. All of this is reached by one set of narrow, circular concrete stairs, which give the Caracol (Spanish for “snail”) its name.

The floors are large concrete rooms with large windows. The third floor has a wall of mirrors, about 100 mismatched folding chairs, a dozen white plastic folding tables, and a corner full of donated toys and art supplies. The fourth floor is

*Continued on page 16*



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## A Week with Al Otro Lado

continued from page 15

the cramped office, housing a conference table, around which volunteers cluster over donated laptops, and a tiny open-air patio strung with Mexican fiesta flags, which serves occasionally as a wedding venue for immigrants. The plumbing is old and cannot handle any paper. This is the stripped-down home of a bare-bones nonprofit at the center of a burgeoning crisis. As people like to say, they spend every day building a plane at 40,000 feet, which is both burning and flying.

I had been told that I'd be a new volunteer on the first day, and a veteran on the second. This was exactly true. As a non-immigration lawyer, I was soon assigned to the documentation team. This team scans the notes from each individual client's credible fear interview, along with any important papers they want scanned. These included birth and marriage certificates, death certificates, government-issued ID cards, and often newspaper articles and photographs. The latter were not photographs of happy family occasions, but instead they documented the atrocities from which the migrants were fleeing. I almost immediately uncovered an unknown superpower: I could look at these pictures to make sure I scanned them in their entirety and in focus, without actually allowing my brain to see the details. The bundle of scanned documents was then uploaded to the cloud via an Immigration Law Lab software program, and the client was given a password. That way, if the documents were lost, stolen, or "misplaced" by officials, the client had a copy.

On day two, the documentation lead (a volunteer who had been there for three weeks) announced that Wednesday would be her last day, and asked me to train to be the lead. Wednesday through Friday I was the lead, and on Friday I trained Shane to replace me.

Going on around us, often at a roar, was the sound of 8 to 20 credible fear interviews being conducted simultaneously. They were done in six languages that week, for clients from 16 countries. We saw Russian, Turkmen, and Kyrgyz citizens; Yemeni, Somali, Mauritanians, and Ghanaians; Haitians and one Cuban; a Venezuelan. And five out of every six people were from Central America.

From the corner we heard the chatter and laughter of children coloring, playing with cars and balloons, and stringing butterfly beads into bracelets.

On my third day there, we conducted a wedding for a Honduran couple, and on day four, we did two more. (Honduras recognizes civil marriage by statement of intent after a couple has lived together as common law spouses for three years. The U.S. should recognize as valid a marriage done in accordance with the laws of the home country. Al Otro Lado hopes these weddings help couples get their asylum cases linked, but doesn't know for sure whether that is happening.)

More than 200 individuals and families passed through the meeting room of Al Otro Lado while I was there. I saw them parenting sweet children in circumstances that would overwhelm me, attending to one another, and hoping that their suffering had an end in the United States. I saw people I'd welcome as neighbors. People.

Al Otro Lado is welcoming volunteers for weeklong (or longer) stints. There's another caravan forming and moving through Guatemala as I write this in January. If you can't go, donate. If not to this organization, to another. Help them build the plane and put out the fire.

*Kathryn Olney, an OWLS board member, has practiced insurance defense and workers' compensation law for 31 years.*

## Doing Well & Good

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programs. While legal aid serves as a safety net providing legal services to the most underprivileged members of society, the CLC provides "low-bono" services to help keep people from falling even further into poverty.

The result: the CLC is thriving. Its goal is that each of its legal services programs be self-sustaining from earned fees, even vastly reduced fees. Thanks to pro bono lawyer partners, who help train and mentor lawyers working for the CLC, the firm has been able to offer legal services that are below market rate, on a sliding scale based on adjusted gross income, and in just two years, its family law program has become self-sustaining. In the process, the CLC is training tomorrow's lawyers on how to build innovative, profitable, and community-oriented practices of their own. The center recently hired its first new lawyer fellow, who will take the lead on individual matters, working alongside pro bono partners, who help provide quality assurance, and student law clerks, who gain valuable experience.

How can you help the Commons Law Center continue to bridge the gap in legal services to Oregonians?

1. Refer clients to the CLC. Send this article to lawyers in family law, estate planning, probate, nonprofit, or small business law, or send a link to the CLC's website: <https://thecommonslawcenter.org>.

2. Be a pro bono partner. Help train fellows and law clerks to be great lawyers. If you are interested in serving as a pro bono partner, send an email to [hello@thecommonslawcenter.org](mailto:hello@thecommonslawcenter.org) or sign up [here](#).

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*Adrian Brown is an assistant U.S. attorney and treasurer of Queen's Bench.*

1. Oregon State Bar and Portland State University Survey Research Lab, *Oregon State Bar 2017 Economic Survey: Report of Findings* (2017).

2. Oregon State Bar and Portland State University Survey Research Lab, *Barriers to Justice: A 2018 Study Measuring the Civil Legal Needs of Low-Income Oregonians* (2019).

3. OSB Futures Task Force, *Future: The Future of Legal Services in Oregon: Executive Summary* (2017).

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