

# AdvanceSheet™

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## U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor offers words of wisdom at Queen's Bench event

By Jessica Wilcox

U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor was the keynote speaker at the 2022 Queen's Bench Annual Holiday Luncheon held Dec. 13 at the Sentinel Hotel's Governor Ballroom. This was the first holiday luncheon held in person since 2019 and included a diverse panel of lawyers, judges, and law students, as

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## Retired justices leave legacy

### Justice Walters blazed trail for women on Supreme Court

By Ayla Ercin

Former chief Justice Martha Walters of the Oregon Supreme Court retired on Dec. 31 after having served as head of the court since 2018 and as a justice since 2006. Chief Justice Walters is a longtime member of OWLS and is the namesake and first recipient of the Lane County chapter's Chief Justice Martha Walters Award, which recognizes a Lane County



Justice Walters

*Continued on page 15*

### Justice Nakamoto's efforts diversified Oregon bench

By Ayla Ercin

Former Justice Lynn Nakamoto retired from the Oregon Supreme Court on Dec. 31, 2021. On the anniversary of her retirement, Justice Nakamoto generously agreed to speak to the *AdvanceSheet* about her time on the court, her career practicing in Oregon, and the many changes she has witnessed from her unique vantage within the



Justice Nakamoto

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## President's Message

When I get together with family and friends, we love to share recommendations with one another. I've noticed over the years that the pool of sources from which we share recommendations has grown exponentially. Not only are there books, movies, TV shows, albums, and articles — in whatever digital or physical form they now come in — but now there are podcasts and social media channels that each have their own devoted following.

Not that any of these are all that new, but recently I've begun to feel like there is just TOO MUCH CONTENT. I've got a "Want to Read" list over 50 books long, and watchlists on a few different streaming platforms even longer. More often than not, when I am asked if I have read, heard, or seen something, I sheepishly answer, "No," and I know that the chances are 50/50 (and I am probably being generous here) that I will someday get to it. The lists just keep getting longer and longer.

And yet, here I am, creating content for all of you to read.

Yet it's an important exercise; creating original content. With the way social media has evolved, it is often too easy to just "Like" or repost something as a way of sharing your support or opinions with your friends and networks rather than crafting something yourself. With so much content already out there, what's the point of creating more?

When the message is important to the person or entity crafting it, it's important to create content to control the narrative. In this instance, I am not so much thinking about this message, but OWLS' position statements, of which we publish only about a handful each year. Recently, among the positive responses we received to our recent statement regarding human rights in Iran, one OWLS member asked why OWLS has not issued more statements about "tyranny and injustice" around the world. What does it say when we omit to cover certain timely, relevant, and pressing issues, such as the ongoing conflict in Ukraine?

I think many on the OWLS Board, if not all of us, would like to issue more position statements,



but issuing a statement is an involved process. So part of the answer as to why we haven't is another question — How would a statement on a particular issue tie into OWLS' mission?

In 2019, the OWLS

Board agreed on a set of guidelines to work from in evaluating proposals for position statements and advocacy actions. It starts with a proposal, and such proposals can come from any person or organization and must, at minimum, identify:

- The person or organization making the request;
- The issue or position to be endorsed or advocated;

- Any relevant deadlines or timing issues; and

- The reasons why the proposal would advance OWLS' mission and/or principal purposes, and is consistent with these guidelines.

The OWLS Board also requests that the submitter provide a draft, which it will then evaluate and potentially revise. With that process in place, but admittedly

not very well-advertised, we have mainly relied on OWLS Board members with a particular passion to take ownership of our statements from proposal to publication, looping in other interested board members and the OWLS president as part of the drafting process. Having gone through this a few times over the years, I can say it is a meaningful, deliberate, and rewarding process. It is one that is not undertaken lightly and something that OWLS, as an organization, could probably stand to do more of to amplify issues that advance our mission.

I take enormous pride when I share OWLS' position statements on my own social media, just as I take pride every time I see an *AdvanceSheet*

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*Our mission is to transform the legal profession by pursuing equitable access to the legal system and equity for women and communities who are systemically oppressed.*

# Oregon Women Lawyers' statement on human rights in Iran

Oregon Women Lawyers stands in solidarity with the brave people of Iran who are protesting that country's theocratic regime to demand equal rights and human dignity under the law.

In response to reports of the Sept. 16, 2022, murder of Jina Mahsa Amini, a young Kurdish woman killed while in custody of the regime for the crime of showing her hair while wearing a hijab, we stand in solidarity with Iranians chanting "Women, Life, Freedom" in support of true and ultimate freedom for all Iranians. No one is free unless women are free.

Amini's death is not an isolated occurrence. Reports indicate security forces have used their powers to viciously and violently arrest, beat, and kill protesters, while access to social media and the internet is



Protesters in cities around the world gathered to stand in solidarity with demonstrations that broke out in Iran following the death of 22-year old Jina Mahsa Amini at the hands of the country's brutal dictatorship and its "morality" police. (Wikimedia Commons)

curtailed to hide the conditions and suffering. Protesters are being sent to prisons under unthinkable conditions and young children are being sent for reeducation in

psychiatric wards. Iranians deserve dignity, freedom, human rights, and to have agency over their lives and bodies.

Protection of women's rights in Iran is a duty that belongs to all of humanity, and we have a responsibility to speak out against the brutality and injustices being inflicted.

We also acknowledge the pain of our fellow Oregonians with roots in Iran, and they are in our hearts.

Oregon Women Lawyers' mission is to transform the legal profession by pursuing equitable access to the legal system and equity for women and communities that are systemically oppressed.

## President

*Continued from page 2*

hit my inbox. A lot of work by many of your fellow OWLS goes into creating this original content for you, and I thank you for reading all of this today and not just filing it away in an email folder to read later (another favorite way of mine to keep lists).

I invite all of you to contribute to the content creation process, whether it is putting together a proposal for an advocacy action that fits our mission or simply writing an article or two for the *AdvanceSheet*. We can continue to go about our days clicking "Like" on other people's content, but every now and then, we need to be part of the content creation process.

*Kristin Sterling*

Kristin Sterling,  
President, Oregon Women Lawyers

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## Lane County Women Lawyers

Wednesday, Jan. 25, noon

### "A Look Back to the '70s: You've Come a Long Way, Baby!"

Featuring Oregon AG Ellen Rosenblum and Dianne DePaolis

Speakers will share their experiences and memorabilia from the original organization of the Lane County Bar Association's Women in the Law Committee and the early days of Lane County Women Lawyers.

Bring your lunch; cookies provided. Lane County Circuit Court, 125 E. Eighth Ave., Courtroom 408, Eugene

## Josephine County Women Lawyers Monthly Luncheon

Wednesday, Feb. 1 and March 1, noon-1 p.m.

Chapter meets the first Wednesday of the month for networking, discussing court situations, and more.

La Burrita restaurant, 1501 N.E. F St, Grants Pass; No RSVP is required.

## OWLS Online (formerly First Wednesday)

Thursday, Feb. 9, noon-1 p.m. TEDx topic: "The Mission to Safeguard

# UPCOMING EVENTS

**Black History in the U.S."** by Julieanna L. Richardson  
Zoom; [RSVP here to attend](#)

## First Generation Professionals Discussion Group

Thursday, Feb. 9 and March 8, noon-1 p.m.

Are you the first in your family to go to college? Get a professional degree? Become a lawyer? If you think it would be helpful to talk with others who have had the same life experience, join Judge Jacqueline Alarcón on the second Wednesday of the month for that discussion.

Law students and legal professionals welcome. Bring your lunch; snacks provided. No cost. Multnomah County Circuit Court, 1200 S.W. First Ave., Room 12A, Portland

[RSVP to Judge Jacqueline Alarcón](#)

## Queen's Bench Monthly Luncheon

Tuesday, Feb. 14 and March 14, noon-1 p.m.

Multnomah County Courthouse,

1200 S.W. First Ave., Courtroom 13C, Portland; also on Facebook Live  
Queen's Bench Presentations are the second Tuesday of the month at noon. No cost. [Register Online.](#)

## Cascade Women Lawyers Monthly Luncheon

Wednesday, Feb. 22 and March 29, noon-1 p.m.

The chapter meets the last Wednesday of the month noon-1 p.m. Old Towne Pizza 118 N.W. Greenwood Ave., Bend. No RSVP is required.

## Roberts & Deiz Award Celebration

Friday, May 12, 5:30 p.m.

Join OWLS and the OWLS Foundation at The Loft at 8th Ave., 2010 S.E. Eighth Ave., Portland

# OWLS members win election

By Joslyn Keating

We are proud of our members who ran in the November 2022 election and thank them for bringing their important perspectives and values to the electoral process.

Of note, Christina Stephenson won her bid for Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor and Industries, defeating her opponent by a decisive 22% margin. Amy Queen won election to Position 14 on the Marion County Circuit Court, beating out incumbent and fellow OWLS member Erious Johnson Jr. On the Lane County Circuit Court, Incumbent Judge Beatrice Grace retained her contested seat.

Three additional judges ran for and secured uncontested judicial positions: Court of Appeals Judge Anna Joyce, Marion County Circuit Court Judge Jennifer Gardiner, and Multnomah County Circuit Court Judge Jenna Plank and Jacqueline Alarcon, and Lane County Circuit Court Judge Michelle Bassi.

*Joslyn Keating is an attorney for Reinisch Wilson Weier in Portland and owner of Cake Hoopla, [www.cakehoopla.com](http://www.cakehoopla.com).*



**SAVE THE DATE**  
**Roberts & Deiz Award Celebration**

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**May 12, 2023**

**The Loft at 8th Ave.,  
Portland, 5:30 pm**

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# Judge Waller receives Rehnquist Award for Judicial Excellence

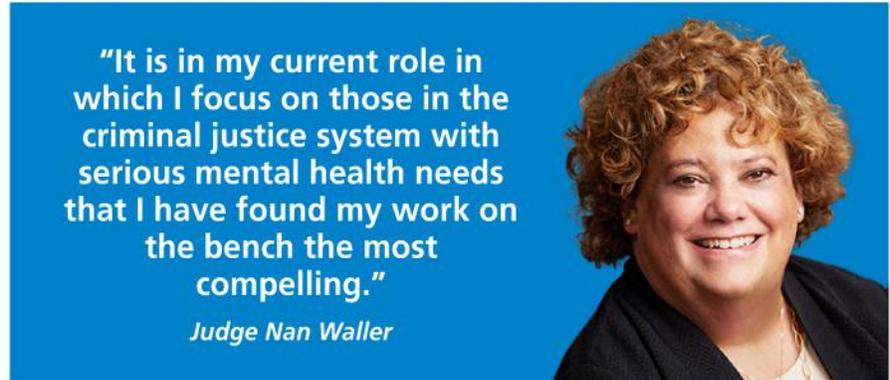
By Joslyn Keating

**M**ultnomah County Circuit Court Judge Nan Waller received the 27th annual William H. Rehnquist Award for Judicial Excellence presented by the National Center for State Courts (NCSC).

This prestigious award honors a state court judge who demonstrates judicial excellence through integrity, fairness, knowledge, creativity, and intellectual courage, among other qualities.

The event took place Nov. 17 at the U.S. Supreme Court, with Chief Justice John Roberts Jr. presenting the award. Oregon Supreme Court Chief Justice Martha Walters introduced Judge Waller and highlighted some of her many contributions to the community, such as developing innovative approaches to family law, mental health, and racial disparities.

Justice Walters said, "What sets Nan apart



is the breadth of the contributions she has made and the depth of her compassion for the people she serves."

In her remarks, Judge Waller spoke of her inspiration to lead change after witnessing the difficulties people encounter at the intersection of courts and mental illness.

"It is in my current role in which I focus on those in the criminal justice system with

serious mental health needs that I have found my work on the bench the most compelling, the application of the principles of procedural justice the most imperative, and my work off the bench the most urgent," she said.

*Joslyn Keating is an attorney for Reinisch Wilson Weier in Portland and owner of Cake Hoopla, [www.cakehoopla.com](http://www.cakehoopla.com).*

## OWLS seeks board members

**T**his spring, the Oregon Women Lawyers Board of Directors will have openings. If you have played a leadership role with an OWLS chapter, committee or other affinity bar organization and are interested in supporting the OWLS mission, please consider serving on the board. Members provide financial oversight, strategic direction, assist in fundraising, and help shape the future of OWLS programs and policies. The OWLS board is an active board.

Elections occur in April, with new members taking office May 1 for a three-year term. Meetings are held eight times a year; board members are limited to two three-year terms.

If you want to help guide OWLS through the coming years and form valuable connections with other attorneys around the state, complete this statement of interest and send a current resume to OWLS President-elect Adele Ridenour at [owlsresident@oregonwomen-lawyers.org](mailto:owlsresident@oregonwomen-lawyers.org) by Feb. 10.

A photograph of Molly Jo Mullen, a woman with short grey hair, wearing a black top and a patterned skirt, standing on a balcony with a railing. The background shows trees with yellow leaves.

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# ‘We Exist!’

## OADA is the first affinity bar organization in Oregon for attorneys and law students who experience disability

By The Honorable Adrian Lee Brown

**F**our Oregon attorneys — with different backgrounds and different disabilities — met for lunch in the summer of 2019 seeking a place to share their experiences as an attorney with a disability; a place that embraced and fostered disability as a diversity value; and a place to join together with other attorneys with disabilities to “find a way to get in the way.”<sup>1</sup>

The four attorneys — Emily Cooper, Disability Rights Oregon legal director; Barbara Diamond, arbitrator; Miranda Summer, Washington County Circuit Court judge, and me — knew that establishing a new affinity bar organization for attorneys with disabilities would not be an easy task.

With the personal and professional challenges of COVID-19 over the past two years, the Oregon Attorneys With Disabilities Association (OADA) is still a fledgling organization. We continue working to build a solid foundation from which to grow, keenly aware that as attorneys with disabilities, we are not strangers to facing and overcoming a range of barriers that still exist and prevent full integration into the legal community. Indeed, everyone with a disability has experienced a common struggle. Our society, whether in structure, policy, profession, or social construct, was not made to embrace, let alone accommodate, individuals experiencing disability, the legal profession included. Attorneys and law students still experience discrimination at law schools, in the bar exam testing and bar admission process, as well as in the legal profession as a whole. Continued intentional or unintentional discrimination reinforces approval to not fully include those with disabilities.

The long history of discrimination and exclusion of individuals with disabilities by society points to why integration of individuals with disabilities is a civil right and the



importance of the establishment of OADA and its unofficial motto — “We Exist!” While educational resources abound about the civil rights history of disability, an easily accessible place to start is with the video [“The Promise of Olmstead: 15 Years Later,”](#) which is a tribute to those with disabilities who were isolated in institutions for most or all of their entire lives simply because they had a disability.

The video connects the work of the attorneys who advocated for change, eventually prevailing in a landmark Supreme Court decision, *Olmstead v. L.C., et al.*, 527 U.S. 581 (1999), and the individuals impacted by their attorneys’ advocacy efforts. Be ready with tissues for both tears of sadness at the historical widespread discrimination as well as tears of joy for the hope of change.

While the law has progressed in many ways to promote integration of people with disabilities since *Olmstead*, including the [Americans With Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 \(ADAAA\)](#), the practical application and enforcement is complaint driven. In short, barriers faced long before *Olmstead*, or the ADAAA, may continue to exist unless there is a complaint filed (or an entity conducts a self-evaluation and makes modifications to structures for universal accessible design and program access).

Unfortunately, even as lawyers trained in spotting issues, many of us do not recognize

what the barriers to access are — whether structural or program access — unless they or someone they love experiences disability. It requires people with disabilities to “find a way to get in the way” to make it known that we exist.

When structures, programs, and policies are modified to accommodate and embrace those with disabilities, the benefit is universal. An example of the benefit of universal design is accessible ramps, either in addition to or in replacement of steps. While certainly a person who uses a wheelchair will now have access to enter a structure via the ramp (assuming the ramp meets design standards for accessibility), all individuals with mobility limitations will face less of a barrier than with steps — people who use canes, walkers, or crutches; people with children in strollers; and people who have leg or foot injuries, just to name a few.

Even when there is an acknowledgement of access for people with disabilities, it often comes with the continued stigma against full and equitable inclusion. Continuing with the ramp example, if a structure is modified to include a ramp, where previously there was none, and the ramp is placed at the back of the building, rather than at the front or main public entrance, individuals using the ramp continue to face an access barrier by not being allowed to use the public entrance that everyone else uses, as well as the societal barrier of inequitable treatment and stigmatization that treating people with disabilities differently is acceptable, even if it is against the law.

Another example we may appreciate as lawyers and law students is accessibility issues at social networking events, whether it’s an in-person event or a Zoom social. How many of us who have attended or were involved in the planning of such an event ever gave a

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<sup>1</sup> A civil rights call to action championed by congressman and civil rights activist John Lewis. See [Rep. John Lewis speech](#), 2015 CARE National Conference. Full transcript available at: <https://www.care.org/news-and-stories/ideas/rep-john-lewis-find-a-way-to-get-in-the-way/>.

# Immigration advocate Raquel Hecht honored for equal justice leadership

By Jeslyn Everitt

Lane County Women Lawyers presented the fourth annual Chief Justice Martha Walters Award to Raquel Hecht at an in-person ceremony and luncheon on Nov. 18.

The Chief Justice Martha Walters Award, named after its first recipient, Hon. Martha Walters, recognizes a Lane County attorney who has demonstrated leadership in the pursuit of equal justice for all. The 2022 recipient, Raquel Hecht, has dedicated her life to serving those from underserved communities, and exemplifies the mission of the award through her relentless advocacy and commitment to justice.

Hecht works tirelessly on behalf of immigrant communities by helping individuals navigate complicated and protracted legal processes to find permanent residence in Oregon and relief from removal and deportation. She is the founding partner of the law firm of Hecht and Norman, LLP, the largest immigration law office in the Willamette Valley. Through her leadership, the firm serves over 1,000 clients a year. The firm handles all types of



Raquel Hecht receives the Chief Justice Martha Walters Award from Hon. Debra E. Velure for her tireless efforts helping immigrants navigate the process to become lawful permanent residents and U.S. citizens.

immigration work, from representing asylum-seekers and abandoned youth to helping international athletes obtain travel visas to compete at the World Athletics Championships in Eugene. Hecht's law firm also helps reunite families by securing family based immigration visas and diversifies and strengthens the workforce by seeking work-related visas for doctors in rural towns and highly skilled workers.

Hecht also is a founding member of the Grupo Latino de Acción Directa (GLAD), an organization dedicated to the education, outreach, and mentoring of community members to

*Continued on page 8*

## OADA

*Continued from page 6*

moment's thought to how the event would be inclusive of people with mobility, seeing, or hearing disabilities? During preparations for the event, were questions asked like: Can a person who uses a wheelchair enter, move about, interact, and exit the space with the same access as someone not using a wheelchair? Can a person who experiences deafness or hearing loss participate in the conversations or understand the speaker? Is there a process for people to request an accommodation (such as access for a service animal)? Are the individuals tasked with responding to such requests trained on the law and best practices in providing accom-

modations for people with disabilities? If these questions weren't asked, start asking them, and engage in a dialogue that will both help educate and destigmatize disability.

OADA exists to promote full integration of lawyers and law students with disabilities by promoting universal access and destigmatization through navigating change with the bar, our profession and practice, and the public we serve. As an affinity bar, we strive to provide a space for lawyers and law students who experience a disability to connect, listen, and support one another. Our current list of law students and attorneys involved in OADA includes more than 50 individuals statewide and continues to grow.

We are pleased to share several accomplishments in this past year of membership growth. We actively participated in the

Oregon Judicial Diversity Coalition judicial candidate interview process. We co-hosted a CLE with the OSB Disability Law Section on Secondary Trauma in the Legal Profession. We provided written comments to the OSB Licensing Pathways Development Committee Advisory Group. We also took time to get to know one another at our first social event, graciously hosted by Lane Powell.

We currently meet at noon the first Tuesday of each month via Zoom. Our Zoom meeting ID is: 799 691 4214, and the passcode is: "OADA." If you are interested in joining the OADA email list, please send an email to [contact@oadabar.org](mailto:contact@oadabar.org). Check out [OADA's Facebook page](#) for updates and details.

*The Honorable Adrian Lee Brown is a Multnomah County Circuit Court judge.*

**Hecht is a founder of Grupo Latino de Acción Directa (GLAD), which is dedicated to the education, outreach, and mentoring of community members to encourage greater participation in the political process.**

## Hecht

*Continued from page 7*

encourage greater participation in the political process. GLAD provides forums to educate and engage young people on issues of interest to underrepresented communities, including the JusticeKids program that educates youth about immigration processes and law.

Hecht understands from her own background, including portions of her childhood spent as a foreigner in Brazil, how it feels to be an outsider. She has made it her mission to connect with people.

Hecht ultimately pursued immigration law because she perceived the need in the area. Some of the cases she has taken have had nationwide impact by creating new legal precedents that create more just outcomes not just for her clients but also for those facing similar hurdles in communities across the country. Other practitioners describe Hecht as brilliant, caring, and considerate, and as someone who thinks outside of the box and is committed to helping others who are less fortunate than she.

The Nov. 18 award ceremony was held at The Gordon Hotel in Eugene. The program featured remarks by Chief Justice Walters, a slideshow review of past award presentations, and an interview of Hecht moderated by GLAD of Lane County board members Erin Back and Jeff Measelle.

Hecht told participants at the ceremony that it was an honor to be considered for the award. She shared that “Chief Justice Martha Walters herself is such an amazing, caring person in the community and made such a difference for women.” Hecht hopes to carry on that legacy by encouraging women to continue the fight for social justice.

*Jeslyn Everitt is an associate general counsel at the University of Oregon and member of the OWLS Lane County chapter.*



*Raquel Hecht high-fives well-wishers Nov. 18 after receiving the Chief Justice Martha Walters Award.*



*Standing, from left: Ariana Denley, Lorelei Craig, Jeslyn Everitt, Kasia Mlynski, Chelle Haynes. Seated, from left: Hon. Debra E. Velure, Raquel Hecht, Shannon Richard.*



*From left: Reuben Zahler, Erin Beck, Raquel Hecht, Guadalupe Quinn, Mariana Hernandez. Back row, from left: Jeffrey Measelle, Gerardo Garcia.*

# Law students awarded Armonica grants

By Gizem Demirel

**L**eona Yazdidoust, Mai Lani Moua, and Shiri Salehin are the Armonica Law Student Grant recipients for the 2022-23 academic year. Although each comes from a different background, all three students have exemplary and inspirational stories.

## Mai Lani Moua

Moua is a third-year law student at the University of Oregon School of Law. As a young Hmong woman, she is proud to be the first generation in her family to attend law school. Although she comes from a large family where she is the eighth born of 13 children, she never



Mai Lani Moua

forgets the loneliness and hardships coming from an underrepresented community. That's why, for Moua, becoming a lawyer means more than a career. She started serving her community by assisting high school students with their college applications at the Hmong Student Association during her undergraduate years at the University of California, Santa Cruz, where Moua graduated in history with several honors. She then clerked for the U.S. District Court for the District of Oregon, where she had a chance to see how her Hmong culture sometimes clashes with the American legal system, especially in family law. Moua wants to guide Hmong communities through family law issues so that community members have easy access to legal aid.

However, having higher ambitions in life comes with some sacrifices too. While she is busy getting ready for her graduation, Moua works at two nonlegal jobs to cover her law school expenses. Moua says the Armonica grant will help her reduce her work hours to focus more on her academic and professional pursuits in civil and human rights-related issues.

## Shiri Salehin

Salehin also is a third-year law student at the University of Oregon School of Law

choosing to become the first lawyer in their family. Salehin was determined to get involved in the legal profession after visiting the international criminal court at



Shiri Salehin

The Hague while pursuing a master's degree in public policy and international law in Europe.

Currently, Salehin interns at the Office of the Inspector General in Washington, D.C. As an ambitious law student, Salehin served as the president of the UO OUTLaws, LGBTQ+ Student Association at the University of Oregon, and increased recognition of and respect for pronouns in the legal community. While externing for the U.S. District Court in the District of Oregon, Salehin also helped to prepare judicial education materials on pronouns. Salehin is grateful for the Armonica grant. They are excited about their plans, which focus on increasing access to justice for historically underrepresented groups.

## Leona Yazdidoust

Yazdidoust is a third-year law student at Lewis & Clark Law School. As members of the Baha'i faith, Yazdidoust's family emigrated from Iran due to religious persecution. An undergraduate internship at Portland State



Leona Yazdidoust

University's Student Legal Services inspired her to become a lawyer. She is the first in her immediate family to pursue a legal career. Yazdidoust enjoys

being an active member of the legal community where she serves as an executive board member of several organizations, including the Student Bar Association, Women's Law Caucus, Phi Alpha Delta, and Family Law Society. She keeps her legal research skills sharp as a student representative for LexisNexis and stays connected to newer members of the law school community as a 1L peer mentor.

Yazdidoust clerked at the Oregon Department of Justice before returning to PSU's

## About the Armonica Law Student Grant

**T**he OWLS Foundation presents the Armonica Law Student Grant in honor of late foundation board member Armonica Gilford.

The grant is available to students in their final year at an Oregon law school who demonstrate through their life, work, volunteer efforts, or educational achievement a commitment to the foundation's mission and who intend to continue that commitment in Oregon.

Grant determination is based on a combination of the following criteria:

- Personal statement: 50%
- Financial need: 35%
- Overall application, including typographical errors, spelling, grammar, and completeness. 15%

The \$2,000 grant helps students with law school expenses and matches each recipient with a female judge or attorney mentor for the year. Women and members of other historically underrepresented groups are especially encouraged to apply.

Applications must be submitted between Aug. 1 and Sept. 15 of the student's final year of law school. Grant recipients are notified in October.

Student Legal Services as a court-certified law clerk, where she concurrently clerks at a private law firm. She further explored her passion for pro bono legal services in immigration-related issues.

The Armonica grant has empowered Yazdidoust to continue to serve her community and pursue enriching legal experiences that allow her to advocate for those who cannot advocate for themselves. While she is grateful for her family's sacrifices, she is also thankful for the support she received from the OWLS Foundation and OWLS during her time with Queen's Bench.

*Gizem Demirel is an attorney licensed in Oregon and Turkey. She is a member of the OWLS Foundation Board and OWLS Board.*



# Meet Washington County Circuit Court Judge Miranda Summer

By Laura Gardner

In 2016 Judge Miranda Summer (who uses the pronouns they/them/theirs) started considering new ventures, specifically eyeing the judicial bench.

After earning their bachelor's degree from Regis University in Denver, Colorado and a law degree from the University of Oregon School of Law, Judge Summer practiced workers' compensation law, became an administrative law judge and municipal court judge, and managed their own family law practice for over 10 years.

Prior to sitting on the bench, Judge Summer dedicated extensive time and energy to their family law clients. Working in that sector — as an attorney and as a judge — Judge Summer realized their main goal was to help parties find common ground. Offering reminders that both sides care and usually strive for similar goals can help minimize conflict during the proceedings. Although the parties may not be the family they imagined, appearing together in a courtroom, they are still connected, and Judge Summer takes pride in helping all parties remember that.

While practicing family law in 2016, Judge Summer realized they could have a bigger impact from the bench rather than advocating for one individual at a time. Having worked as both an administrative law and municipal judge, they were not a stranger to working in a judicial role. Judge Summer sought the Washington County Circuit Court seat vacated by Judge Ramón Pagán, who moved up to the Oregon Court of Appeals. Judge Summer was appointed to that seat by Oregon Gov. Kate Brown in January 2022.

Once on the bench, Judge Summer knew mastering the flow of the courtroom would be incredibly important to maintain the court's efficiency, because judges are limited in how



When not deciding cases, Judge Miranda Summer volunteers in the community and enjoys woodworking, wine tasting, and spending time with their wife coaching their daughter in youth sports.



much time and resources they can provide for each case. However, the upshot is being forced to keep moving on to the next matter at hand. Reflecting on their first 10 months as a circuit court judge, Judge Summer jokes that their family probably would say Judge Summer is less stressed as a judge than as a solo practitioner. But Judge Summer says they feel a substantial amount of responsibility these days, and they have great respect for the bench because every decision is so important.

Outside the courtroom, Judge Sum-



mer loves to spend time with their wife and daughter. Judge Summer and their wife met while in line for a concert 22 years ago and were married in 2013 when the

*Continued on page 11*

## Judge Summer

*Continued from page 10*

Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) was struck down and marriage equality was legalized in the United States. They enjoy attending sporting events (go Thorns!) and coaching their daughter in a variety of youth sports. When not cheering on athletes or collecting wine, Judge Summer can be found woodworking in the garage, making furniture such as bookshelves, coffee tables, and Judge Summer's favorite: a sofa trestle table made with reclaimed wood from a 120-year-old barn in southern Oregon.

Judge Summer has dedicated their legal career to helping others. Not just clients but colleagues, attorneys, and more. At an "Explore the Law" event at Portland State University last summer, Judge Summer spoke about the importance of helping people behind you on the path to a legal career. (This program pairs attorneys and law students with undergrads thinking about pursuing a law degree.)

In the past, there were limitations on who could attend law school. Even though the first U.S. law school was established in 1784, people of color and women would have to wait to enroll. While centuries have passed, there are still perceived notions and biases on who should be a lawyer, so supporting students and new attorneys is important, Judge Summer emphasized.

Networking is vital in the legal community, and Judge Summer had some advice for people who are introverted or feel uncomfortable at networking events: "just show up." Even if you don't talk to many people the first few times, if you keep coming back, more people will recognize you and start a conversation. Judge Summer said they have made career advancements through networking and volunteering. Getting yourself out there, however you can, forges connections and relationships leading to bigger and better things.

Judge Summer is deeply appreciated in the legal community and was chosen as the 2022 Minoru Yasui Justice Award recipient. They were honored at the Oregon Law Awards event in September. The award is given to a graduate, faculty member, or friend of Oregon Law whose commitment to advancing the cause of justice on behalf of underrepresented communities brings honor to the school. We cannot think of a better recipient and congratulate Judge Summer.

**Laura Gardner** is an associate attorney at MLR Legal Team.

# Thank you!

## OWLS thanks these members for renewing at an enhanced level

Susanne Aronowitz (Portland)	Aruna Masih (Portland)
Elizabeth Bailey (Portland)	Kendra Matthews (Portland)
Elizabeth Ballard Colgrove (Portland)	Gwyn McAlpine (Portland)
Alice Bartelt (Portland)	Simone McCormick (Portland)
Michelle Bartov (Oregon City)	Joshana McVeigh (Vancouver)
Amy Bingham (Dallas)	Elizabeth Milesnick (Portland)
Whitney Boise (Portland)	Sonia Montalbano (Portland)
Hon. Allison Boomer (Salem)	Hon. Jodie Mooney (Salem)
Eden Rose Brown (Salem)	Erin Morris (Portland)
Megan Burgess (Bend)	Molly Jo Mullen (Portland)
Melissa Busley (Portland)	Gretel Ness (Portland)
Laura Caldera Loera (Portland)	Leslie O'Leary (Portland)
Sara Carroll (Portland)	Shannon Parrott (Portland)
Matthew Colley (Portland)	Julene Quinn (Portland)
Nancy Cooper (Clackamas)	Kathleen Rastetter (Oregon City)
Laura Craska Cooper (Bend)	Megan Rickert (Portland)
Lee Ann Donaldson (Portland)	Adele Ridenour (Portland)
Dana Forman (Portland)	Kimberly Rose (Salem)
Sara Gabin (Lake Oswego)	Stuart Rue (Salem)
Gerry Gaydos (Eugene)	Kelly Rupp (Wilsonville)
Jenefer Grant (St. Helens)	Lauren Russell (Portland)
Tiffany Hamilton (Salem)	Libby Schwartz (Portland)
Stacy Harrop (Portland)	Rachele Selvig (Ashland)
Natalie Hedman (Gresham)	Judy Snyder (Portland)
Marilyn Heiken (Eugene)	Vivian Solomon (Portland)
Chris Helmer (Portland)	Kristin Sterling (Milwaukie)
Diane Henkels (Portland)	Kimberly Stuart (Portland)
Janet Hoffman (Portland)	Brittany Sumner (Salem)
Meredith Holley (Eugene)	Diane Sykes (Portland)
Nikola Jones (Portland)	Julie Vacura (Portland)
Hon. Jackie Kamins (Salem)	Heather Van Meter (Portland)
Eric Kearney (Portland)	Victory Walker (Grants Pass)
Kay Kinsley (Salem)	Hon. Nan Waller (Portland)
Elizabeth Large (Portland)	Sharon Williams (Portland)
Niamh Lewis (Lake Oswego)	Michael Yates (Portland)
Hon. Marilyn Litzenberger (Portland)	



**OWLS**  
Oregon Women Lawyers

# Meet OWLS board member Judge Rima Ghandour

By Judge Jenna Plank

Rima Ghandour tries to embody the advice she often gives young attorneys: Always reach for something; you are more capable than you think.



Judge Rima Ghandour

Ghandour was born and raised in Beirut, Lebanon. She moved to the United States at age 18, and now owns her own legal practice in Portland, where she is a civil litigator for both plaintiffs and defendants in a wide variety of legal areas. OWLS also proudly claims Ghandour as one of its newest board members.

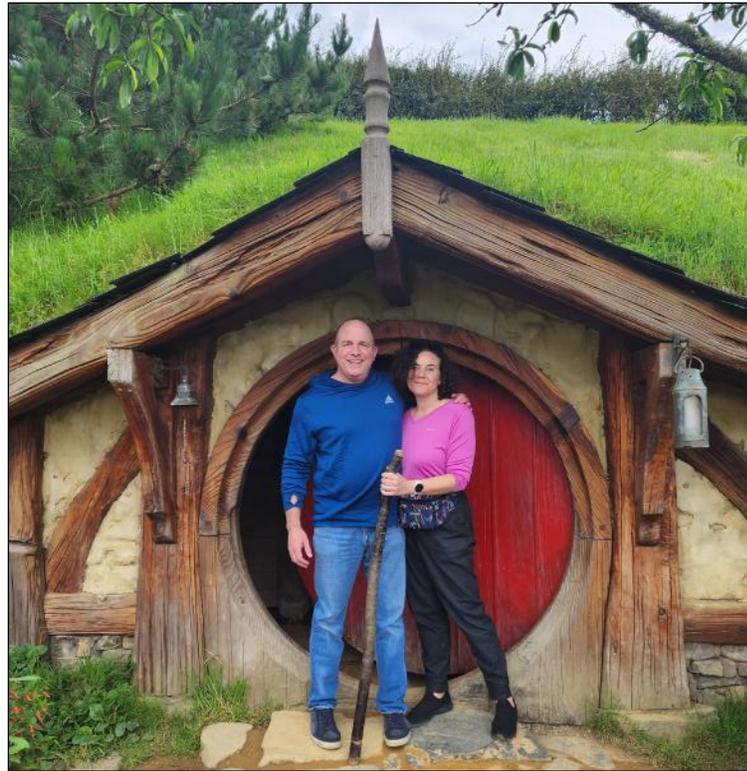
Ghandour was brought up in a family where education was paramount, and her father instilled in her the value of self-sufficiency at an early age. At age 18, Ghandour moved halfway across the world to attend Colgate University in New York. She realized early on that her future was in America, and that even though her parents remained in Beirut, she would likely never move back to her native Lebanon.

Ghandour studied political science and international relations at Colgate and was fascinated by the American legal system. Even with its many imperfections, she loved the American justice system and how starkly different it was from the legal system she'd grown up with. Ghandour knew she eventually wanted to pursue a law career and worked a summer internship in Washington, D.C. That summer she met another student, Kelley Blaine, on a law school internship. They later married and eventually moved back to her husband's native Southern California.

Shortly thereafter, Ghandour enrolled in law school at the University of San Diego. While studying, she held a variety of job. Upon graduation, Ghandour worked at a large civil firm, a midsize insurance firm, and as an associate counsel at the Orange County Attorney's Office.

Ghandour and her husband worked in the legal field in Southern California for four years, but their hearts remained in the Pacific Northwest. When Ghandour's younger sister relocated to Oregon it was the little push they needed to make the move themselves.

The couple moved to Oregon in 2002, and



Judge Rima Ghandour and her husband, Kelley Blaine, traveled to New Zealand in November where they visited the Hobbiton movie set (left) from "The Lord of the Rings" on the North Island and went diving (below) off Kaikoura in the South Island.



Ghandour initially found the Portland legal market insular. Despite her experience, she had a hard time finding a job and did some independent contracting to make ends meet. She eventually was hired as in-house counsel by Safeco, then moved to a midsize firm.

Ten years ago, Ghandour made the decision to go out on her own, practicing both plaintiff and defense civil litigation and taking on unfamiliar cases that presented opportunities to learn new industries and areas of the law.

On Dec. 28, Gov. Kate Brown appointed Ghandour to the Multnomah County Circuit Court. Ghandour will fill the vacancy created by Judge Stephen Bushong's elevation to the Supreme Court.

Ghandour became a member of OWLS shortly after moving to Oregon and eventually was recruited by friends to join the Queen's Bench board. She ultimately decided to take on the larger role of OWLS board member because she felt her unique experiences and point of view could be a positive contribution to the organization. Ghandour currently is very involved in the subcommittees on judicial appointments and the fall CLE.

In her spare time, Ghandour loves to read, ski, travel, spend time with friends and family, and to mentor other lawyers. She says life has taught her that young women are almost always more capable and more qualified than they give themselves credit for. Ghandour's advice to other women lawyers is that they always need to set a goal, even if they think it is unattainable. Young women lawyers are capable of anything — they just need to believe it themselves.

*Judge Jenna Plank is on the Multnomah County Circuit Court.*

## Justice Sotomayor

*Continued from page 1*

well as departing Queen's Bench president, April Stone, and new president, Veronica Rodriguez.

Justice Sotomayor attended the luncheon virtually and commended OWLS for its important work furthering legal opportunities for women in Oregon, specifically noting that half of the Oregon bench are women.

In 2009, President Barack Obama appointed Justice Sotomayor to the U.S. Supreme Court from the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, where she had served for 12 years. Prior to that, Justice Sotomayor dedicated her legal career to serving her hometown of New York City, where she sat on the bench of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, served as a New York City assistant district attorney, and worked in private practice with the New York City law firm Pavia & Harcourt.

A Yale Law School graduate, Justice Sotomayor entered the legal profession before any women sat on the Supreme Court. Today, she is one of four women justices and the first Latina woman justice. She also is the first lawyer in her family, inspired to join the profession after watching the TV legal drama "Perry Mason."

In her memoir, *My Beloved World*, Justice Sotomayor detailed the impact of her childhood as the daughter of Puerto Rican immigrants in the Bronx. She credits her widowed mother, Celina Baez, who, despite working six days a week as a nurse, provided her daughter with the opportunities, skills, and support that resulted in her success.

Justice Sotomayor says her innate optimism, perseverance, and a dash of stubbornness have helped her, but she believes that to thrive, a child must have at least one adult in their life who shows them unconditional love and respect and has confidence in them.

During Justice Sotomayor's hourlong talk to the Queen's Bench, she talked about what motivates her and said that law is all about relationships and taking care of people whose relationships are sick.

She says she frequently engages with people on the ways the law could work, which she hopes will rally younger people to participate in society, have hope and find their own path of passion for doing something about the things they care about.



*The Queen's Bench Board of Directors includes (back row, from left) Melissa Creech, Leona Yazdidoust, Stacie Damazo, April Stone, Angela Hajihashemi, Allie Sandhu, and Hon. Beth Allen. (Front row, from left) Hon. Monica Herranz, Veronica Rodriguez, Miriam Wainwright, and Ekuia Hackman. Board members not pictured: Hon. Morgan Long, Erin Dawson, Stephanie Engelsman, Sunny Maxwell, Isela Ramos, and Nicole Curtis.*

During a Q&A afterward, Justice Sotomayor said that while childhood experiences are complex, diverse, and impactful, they are not the only thing that defines people. Other challenges and experiences alter a person, and the strength and perseverance born out of that has an impact on choices too.

Justice Sotomayor also acknowledged the

enormous effect her academic and professional mentors had on her and her career. Crediting them for much of her success, she actively sought them out throughout school.

She also had some tips for the mentors in the audience, advising them that their

*Continued on page 14*

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# Anne Holt

To learn more about this grant and other grants,  
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# Justice Sotomayor

*Continued from page 13*

goal should be for their mentee to surpass them and do things better. Likewise, she advises mentees to identify good lawyers and emulate them.

Justice Sotomayor chose to become a trial lawyer straight out of law school on the recommendation of her mentor, famed New York District Attorney Robert Morgenthau.

The DA's office provided opportunities for her to expand her skillset and learn how to deal with the facts and and the law within the confines of those facts. She learned how to write and speak persuasively, but cautioned that being a trial lawyer is not a career for all lawyers.

That proved true for Justice Sotomayor, and she left the office after four years to return to private practice. She tells young lawyers not to be afraid to take a detour and follow their own path.

On becoming a successful lawyer, Justice Sotomayor believes everyone is entitled to do something they like and can do well, which often can be found by exploring and volunteering.

After 42 years in the legal field, Justice Sotomayor has observed changes within the profession, noting that collegiality has waned.

To maintain respectful interactions with people with opposing points of view, Justice Sotomayor again credits her mother as a model. She says her mother got along with everyone and often reminded her daughter that if people frustrated her she should think about what they were experiencing and how they had helped her in the past.

Justice Sotomayor says her job is to listen to



*U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor spoke virtually to the Queen's Bench Annual Holiday Luncheon on Dec. 13 at the Governor Ballroom in the Sentinel Hotel in Portland.*



*Hon. Eve Miller, Jennifer Peckham, and Maxine Tuan.*

Proceedings of the National Academy of Science about Oregon's current state of perpetual drought, believing these are the issues of the future.

The justice finished her discussion by acknowledging that in the past she had to rely on men to extend goodwill

those who have made different conclusions of law and realize their opinions are neither right nor wrong, just different, and should strive to find commonality where possible.

Another change in the law Justice Sotomayor identified were the legal implications of climate change. She demonstrated her knowledge about the state of Oregon, citing the recent paper published in the

and promote her. They did so despite the racism and sexism apparent at the time. She said women lawyers are better equipped to deal with it now because of organizations like OWLS.

*Jessica Wilcox works in labor and employee relations for the City of Vancouver, Washington.*



*Anne Milligan, Emily Lohman (event vocalist), and April Stone.*



*Justice Adrienne Nelson, Darlene Pasieczny, and Andrew Schpak.*

## Judge Walters

*Continued from page 1*

attorney who has demonstrated leadership in the pursuit of equal justice for all.

"It doesn't feel like I'm stepping down, it feels like I'm stepping forward into a new role" said Chief Justice Walters when she spoke to us in December. This forward-looking approach is typical of the innovation and leadership she demonstrated as she advanced into each of the many roles she has filled in the Oregon legal system.

Chief Justice Walters graduated from the University of Oregon Law School in the Class of 1977 — the first class that had women making up 25% of the student body. The network of women that began to form in law school coalesced into an informal organization doing similar work in the broader legal field. It was a time before affinity and professional associations like OWLS existed to support women in the legal profession, and these professional networks were a valuable source of collaboration and support that allowed her to make innovative moves in the legal market, including co-founding the Eugene firm of Walters, Romm & Chanti in 1992 with all-women founders.

In her private practice, Chief Justice Walters prominently worked in employment and civil rights. A well-known example was her successful representation of former Oregon State University softball coach Vickie Dugan in a wrongful termination case centered on retaliation for Dugan's Title XI advocacy.

When Walters became chief justice in 2018, she was the first woman to lead the state's highest court — a position also overseeing the entire Oregon Judicial Department with its 200 judges, almost 1,500 employees, judicial districts across the state, and a biennial general fund budget of \$600.6 million.

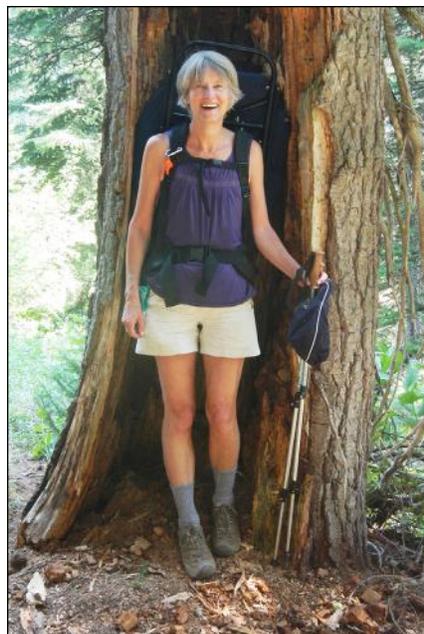
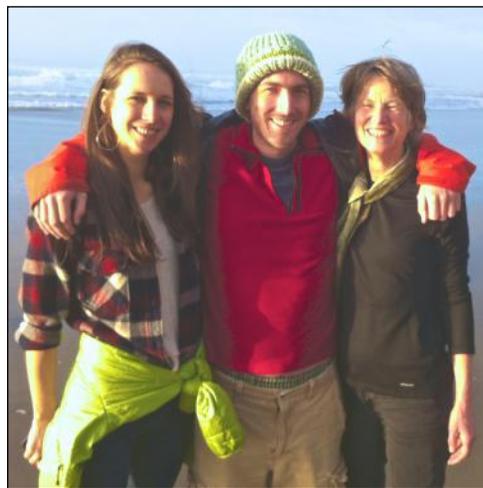
Justice Walters transitioned off the court at the same time as the OJD brought its 2020-22 Strategic Campaign to completion. The Strategic Campaign was spearheaded by Chief Justice Walters and represented an ambitious commitment to advance justice in Oregon through initiatives developed with input from diverse and wide-ranging voices across the judicial system.

Chief Justice Walters tells us that she will eagerly watch the progress of the OJD as it advances its equity framework and moves to better serve the many unrepresented parties seeking to navigate the court system on their own. She "will miss the opportunity to lead



*Chief Justice Martha Walters spent much of her career improving access to justice for all Oregonians. Now that she's retired she looks forward to spending time outdoors with family and friends.*

*Photos courtesy Chief Justice Martha Walters*



Meagan Flynn with confidence. Chief Justice Flynn has been a colleague on the court for the past five years. Walters describes Justice Flynn as impressive in her work and "deeply committed to equity and justice for all."

In her free time, Chief Justice Walters likes to get outdoors — hiking, gardening, and running. She also loves to read and cook for friends and family.

from my position, having the chance to move things forward" in these initiatives and others, but passes the reins to new Chief Justice

*Ayla Ercin is an attorney and staff member at the Campaign for Equal Justice in Portland.*

## Shortlisted

# *The Sewing Girl's Tale: A Story of Crime and Consequences in Revolutionary America*

By John Wood Sweet

(Henry Holt and Co., 2022, 365 pages)

### Book Review by Teresa Statler

John Wood Sweet, a professor of history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, has written an interesting narrative history of an important legal case that took place in late-18th century New York.

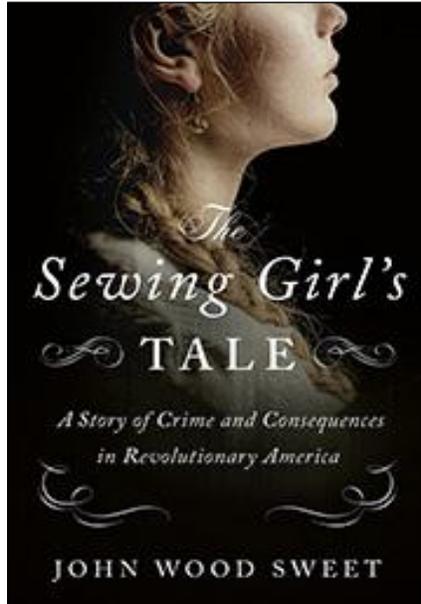
It was the first published rape trial in American history. Sweet obviously has done an incredible amount of detective work and detailed historical research to tell us the story of Lanah Sawyer, a seamstress ("sewing girl" in the vernacular of the time) who suffered date rape by a rich libertine in September 1793.

Sawyer's story is one of sex and power and the misogyny of the legal system of the time. Her accusation that a rich man raped her sparked a raw courtroom drama and a vigorous debate about class privilege and sexual double standards. It also threatened her life, but in the end, her assailant was held accountable in a civil case after a jury found him not guilty in a criminal case.

Sawyer was a 17-year-old girl who was pursued by Harry Bedlow, the scion of a well-to-do New York family. He groomed her by making her acquaintance on the street outside her home, telling her his name was Smith and that he was a successful lawyer. On their first "date," Bedlow essentially kidnapped Sawyer and took her to a brothel he frequented, where he raped her. Instead of feeling ashamed, like many young women of the time would have, Sawyer instead decided to fight back. Even though her family's honor was impugned, she was successful in forcing the state of New York to bring rape charges against Bedlow; a conviction would have resulted in the death penalty.

As Sweet indicates, "Lanah Sawyer faced the prospect of a high-stakes battle with Harry Bedlow and his rich, well-connected family. Even if they endured all that, she and her family faced the possibility of a humiliating public loss. And even if they won, what would they win?" At the time, complaints against local white men of standing, like Bedlow, were often interpreted as threats against the social order.

Sweet describes the rape trial in colorful detail, including describing the courtroom on Wall Street's "soaring three-story lobby" and the "gold-framed portraits of famous men in



Revolutionary War uniforms." The trial was the first reported criminal case in America, thanks to the trial notes taken by a young English lawyer, William Wyche, who later published them. Although court clerks, the judge, and the lawyers took their own notes, there was no official record or transcript. The accused was represented by four esteemed lawyers and the state by two prosecutors.

Sawyer bravely testified against her rapist in a courtroom full of men. Bedlow's attorneys spent most of their time denigrating Sawyer's morals and arguing that she failed to resist enough, so the "seduction" did not qualify as rape. This is essentially the same argument Harvey Weinstein's lawyers made while shaming the victims in the recent California criminal case in which Weinstein was found guilty of rape and sexual assault.

After closing arguments that took longer than the trial itself, Bedlow was found not guilty. The verdict "transformed Lanah Sawyer's failed prosecution of Harry Bedlow into a cause célèbre." Riots broke out for many reasons, not all of them related to the outrages perpetrated against Sawyer. Sweet tells us "the riots and the ensuing newspaper debate had focused attention on conflicts among men and the tendency to blame and shame disorderly women." Sawyer attempted suicide but, fortunately, was unsuccessful. Sawyer and her stepfather then took an extraordinary step: They brought a civil case against Bedlow, filing a "seduction"

lawsuit, which Sweet tells us was a much more powerful form of legal action than a simple assault claim. These suits were a powerful way of holding men of the time to account for sexual harm against women, although "they were steeped in arcane legal conventions and an extreme form of patriarchal thinking."

Sawyer did not have standing to bring the case on her own, but her stepfather did, due to a "man's sexual ownership of 'his' women—his daughters, his servants, his wife." The seduction suit went on for several years, during and after which Bedlow filed for bankruptcy. The judgment against him was an "enormous sum"—about \$4,500 in the New York currency of the time. Sawyer's lawsuit, Sweet tells us, brought change to the legal system of young America: "Increasingly, in the decades to come, jurors responded to claims of seduction and breach of promise with large, punitive judgments."

Sweet is complimentary and supportive of Lanah Sawyer throughout this riveting book, calling her strong and "audacious" and noting that the civil verdict was "a powerful vindication not just of Lanah personally but also of her sense of justice and of reality."

At times, this reader was angry reading what Sawyer had to go through to obtain justice in 1793 New York but appreciative of the extraordinary achievement of the author in bringing this important and dramatic story back to life from the depths of history.

In writing his book, Sweet says he performed "the basic work of social and cultural historians—reading diaries, letters, newspapers, novels, court records, tax lists, wills and inventories and examining material remains, such as paintings, sewing tools and clothes, in light of relevant scholarship." This exhaustive research really shows and makes the reader realize how much this case mattered then—and matters now.

The book contains many illustrations in the form of prints and paintings, some in color, of late 18th-century New York City, as well as a detailed map of lower Manhattan with the important locations in the story marked for the reader's reference. Sweet also includes an appendix that tells us how he was able to reconstruct Sawyer's world, as well as detailed endnotes and an index. *The Sewing Girl's Tale* would be an excellent choice for book groups.

*Teresa Statler recently retired from her solo immigration law practice in Portland.*

# Judge Nakamoto

*Continued from page 1*

legal system.

Justice Nakamoto graduated from NYU Law School in 1985 and began working in civil legal aid in the Bronx. When Justice Nakamoto arrived in Oregon in 1987, she remembers attending litigation-focused CLEs and not seeing a lot of women or people of color in the room. Courtrooms were the same — she remembers them as overwhelmingly male, with few judges or staff of color. The change from the Bronx was stark.

After working at Marion-Polk Legal Aid and eventually becoming the acting executive director there, Justice Nakamoto joined the law firm of Markowitz Herbold PC. She thought the firm might be skeptical of hiring a legal services lawyer for a business litigation position but won them over by focusing on the skills and self-reliance she had learned at Legal Aid.

“When you are a legal services lawyer, you don’t have all [the resources that private firms have] ... you just have to be the kind of lawyer who can figure it out,” she said.

Justice Nakamoto came to Markowitz thinking it would be a one-year position, but didn’t leave until 2011, when she was appointed to the Oregon Court of Appeals by Gov. Ted Kulongoski. In the intervening years, she became managing shareholder and headed the firm when it won the



*Over the course of her career, Justice Lynn Nakamoto, seen here with Hon. Mary James, was instrumental in helping diversify the bench.*

*Photos courtesy Justice Lynn Nakamoto*

inaugural OWLS Workplace Leader Award for its innovative work creating opportunities for women and minorities to advance in the law.

Before her appointment to the Oregon Court of Appeals, Justice Nakamoto was widely known for her work as a volunteer lawyer for the ACLU in cases that helped secure same-sex domestic partner benefits and challenged Oregon’s prohibition against same-sex marriage. When she joined the Supreme Court of Oregon, she was the first Asian American lawyer and the first LGBTQ woman of color on the court.

Justice Nakamoto loved the work of the appellate courts and its attendant freedom to focus on getting the right answer by balancing legal standards and legal principles without being client-driven. She continues her work as a senior judge.

When Justice Nakamoto looks back on her



career, the changes in the legal community stand out: “The affinity bars have really pushed for diversifying the bench, and Oregon is the better for it.” Justice Nakamoto was instrumental in these changes — she helped found the Oregon Minority Lawyers Association (OMLA) and was honored for her work by the Oregon Asian Pacific American Bar Association (OAPABA). She

continues this work as chairperson of the Leadership Institute Advisory Committee, which oversees a nine-month skill-building program for newer lawyers from diverse backgrounds. Justice Nakamoto has been an example of the advice she recently gave to a law student group “to be authentic, to create community, and finally, make your corner of the world a better place.”

In her free time, Justice Nakamoto enjoys cooking and the theater, outdoor activities like walks, hiking and the occasional kayak trip, and enjoys traveling with her wife. They hope to do more international trips in coming years, but most recently have been enjoying camper van trips on the West Coast with their dog.

*Ayla Ercin is an attorney and staff member at the Campaign for Equal Justice in Portland.*



*Justice Lynn Nakamoto has a passion for travel. She and her wife recently went to Maui.*