

# AdvanceSheet™

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## Two recognized for work as allies of the marginalized

*Judge Maalik Summer, Juan Chavez receive 2024 Roberts & Deiz Award*

By Alex Rhee and Linda Tomassi

On May 31, Oregon Women Lawyers held the 31st celebration honoring the recipients of the OWLS Roberts & Deiz Award. The second in-person ceremony after the three-year hiatus due to the pandemic, the event was held at the Leftbank Annex in Portland.

The ceremony began with a welcome by OWLS immediate past-president Adele Ridenour, followed by current

OWLS Foundation President Sharnel Mesirow and the OWLS Foundation Special Appeal.

The OWLS Roberts & Deiz Award honors the legacies of Justice Betty Roberts (1923-2011), a leader in Oregon politics and the first woman appointed to the Oregon appellate bench; and Judge Mercedes Deiz (1917-2005), who worked to promote and advocate for women, minorities, LGBTQ individuals, and those with



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## Clearing convictions

*OWLS across state ready to help eligible expunge criminal records*

By Ayla Ercin

The Oregon Women Lawyers' Community Service Committee and members of Cascade Women Lawyers worked with Legal Aid Services of Oregon (LASO) to put on simultaneous trainings on how to help eligible clients clear their criminal records.

On April 23, OWLS members gathered in downtown Portland to learn about the nuts and bolts of expungements and earned one hour of CLE credit. At the same time, but



more than 150 miles away in Bend, members of Cascade Women Lawyers hosted a simultaneous meetup at the RTR Building.

An expungement is a legal process that allows eligible applicants to

seal an arrest or conviction record and get a second chance. After an expungement, a client can lawfully say that an arrest or conviction did not occur and the record does not exist. This can be vitally important to increasing community safety and support and reducing recidivism.

Having a criminal record can block access to the most basic necessities or achievements in life: It can be more difficult to find a job and pass a

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## President's Message

As I start my term as president of OWLS, I can't help but reflect on the community I have found through this organization and the ways it has shaped both my professional and personal lives.

When I joined OWLS in 2007, I had just graduated law school and knew no one in the legal field. My professional connections at that point were solely other law students, and I lacked a firm understanding of what lawyers actually did when practicing.

Through OWLS, I began to meet attorneys by joining committees and attending monthly Queen's Bench lunches. I signed up for the Contract Lawyers listserv and found my very first legal job: a one-week document review position.

I had always wanted to try a water sport like crew or dragon boating, so when I saw that the Dragonflies were recruiting, I signed up. Spending time each week on the water with the 'Flies

was great exercise and a ton of fun — plus the medals we won didn't hurt!

A Dragonflies teammate recommended that I join the Leadership Committee, which organizes CLEs and mentoring circles aimed at developing leadership skills. Over the years, in helping to facilitate events, I have not only learned new skills myself, but I've also met interesting people whose paths I might not otherwise have crossed.

Although I didn't realize it at the time, one of the most impactful experiences I have had because of OWLS was joining a book club. A poster on the OWLS listserv was recruiting people to join a new book club, and so many inquiries were received that two clubs were formed — one each on the east and west sides of Portland.

By chance, in the east-side club, I met a group

*[Continued on page 3](#)*



OWLS President Marisa Moneyhun joined the Dragonflies, the OWLS-sponsored dragon boat team for exercise and camaraderie. Joining OWLS committees and attending lunches or other activities is a great way to get involved.

**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.**



## President's Message

[Continued from page 2](#)

of women who would become some of my closest friends. A decade later we are reading fewer books but are in constant contact, providing one another with advice and support.

My experience in OWLS is not unique. I have met many members who similarly have made close friends. I started off joining OWLS hoping to better engage with the legal field but discovered so much more.

OWLS isn't simply a way to network with other attorneys, nor is it just a way to find CLEs or keep up-to-date on legal trends. It is a real community, helping individuals to find their path to become not just better attorneys, but also more well-rounded people.

While my experience with OWLS has been primarily in Portland, OWLS has local chapters throughout the state, both established and rebuilding, which are great conduits to your local legal community.

Through chapter engagement, you will meet other professionals who practice near you and understand the dynamics of your legal market.

OWLS committees are also engaged in bringing members together throughout the state, and many have options to participate remotely by Zoom. Committee involvement is perfect for meeting OWLS members from other areas and for helping to shape the programming and voice of OWLS throughout the state.

An OWLS membership is like a choose-your-own adventure book. You can get from it what you are looking for. The more engaged you are, the more you receive in kind.

My hope is that through my presidency, I am able to foster an environment where we can all find our community of friendship and support through OWLS.

Remember, if you are looking to get involved, you can do so at [oregonwomenlawyers.org](https://oregonwomenlawyers.org).



Marisa Moneyhun,  
President, Oregon Women Lawyers

# Thank you, outgoing OWLS board members

By Marisa Moneyhun

**T**he OWLS Board of Directors thanks our three outgoing board members: OWLS President Adele Ridenour and members Silvia Tanner and May Low.

Adele Ridenour, a shareholder at Markowitz Herbold has served on the OWLS board since 2016 and concluded her time on the board as OWLS president from May 2023-24. Ridenour joined the Executive Committee in 2019 and served as historian, treasurer, secretary, president-elect, and president.

During her time on the board, Ridenour co-chaired the Roberts & Deiz Award Committee and was a member of the Awards Committee and the Finance Committee. In October 2023, Ridenour was instrumental in organizing the OWLS Fall CLE — "The Doctrine of Qualified Immunity: Its Origins and Impacts." Ridenour is now the immediate past president of OWLS.

Silvia Tanner, a senior energy policy and legal analyst at the Multnomah County Office of Sustainability, has served on the OWLS board since 2018. Tanner joined the Executive Committee in 2021 and served as historian and secretary. She has been a member of OWLS Working Parents Committee, in which she has also acted as co-chair, the Finance Committee, the Transformation Committee, the Bar Exam Special Committee, and has acted as a Roberts & Deiz deliberator.

May Low, accounting methods and credit services manager at KPMG US, joined the OWLS board in 2018. Low has been a member of OWLS IN, and a member and co-chair of the Working Parents Committee.

The OWLS board will miss all three and thank them for all they have done for the OWLS board and the organization as a whole.

*Marisa Moneyhun, OWLS president, is a partner at Kehoe Moneyhun Law.*



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# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Mary Leonard Chapter – Civil Rights CLE with Ron Silver

July 16, noon-1 p.m., optional social 1-1:30 p.m.

State of Oregon Law Library, 1163 State St., Salem

This June marks the 60th anniversary of the murder of three civil rights workers in Philadelphia, Mississippi, at the start of Freedom Summer in 1964. It took 41 years to bring justice to the case. Join Ron Silver as he tells the story of the murders that shocked America and how the city of Philadelphia finally held itself accountable for its past.

[Register online.](#)

## Brunch & Bedazzle – Portland Pride

July 21, 9-11 a.m.

1120 N.W. Couch St., 10th floor, Portland

Join us at Perkins Coie for brunch and T-shirt decorating before the Portland Pride march. Friends and family members of all ages are welcome. Bring a T-shirt to decorate. Supplies provided. Details about the event and volunteer opportunities are [available here](#). [Register online.](#)

## Clackamas County OWLS Networking Luncheon

July 23, noon-1 p.m.

Firenze Wealth Management, 16803 S.W. Upper Boones Ferry Road, Suite 250, Tigard

Join the Clackamas County OWLS for networking. Snacks and drinks provided; bring your own lunch. No cost. [Register online.](#)

## Cascade Women Lawyers Monthly Luncheon

July 31, Aug. 28, Sept. 25 noon-1 p.m.

Olde Towne Pizza 118 N.W.

Greenwood Ave., Bend

The chapter meets the last Wednesday of the month. No RSVP necessary

## Josephine County Women Lawyers Monthly Luncheon

Aug. 7, Sept. 4, Oct. 2, noon-1 p.m.

La Burrita Restaurant, 1501 N.E. F St., Grants Pass

The chapter meets the first Wednesday of each month for networking, discussing court situations, and more.



No RSVP necessary.

## Queen's Bench Monthly Luncheon

Aug. 13, Sept. 10, Oct. 8, noon-1 p.m.

Multnomah County Courthouse, 1200 S.W. First Ave., Courtroom 13C, Portland

Queen's Bench Presentations are on the second Tuesday of the month. The Queen's Bench 2024 speaker series theme is transition, purpose, and value. We'll explore how to identify and pursue our purpose and values, and how to find comfort in transition and growth. Register for [August](#), [September](#) or [October](#).

## Lawyers Association of Washington County Luncheon

Aug. 21, noon-1 p.m.

Bethany Public House, 4840 N.W.

Bethany Blvd., Portland

Chapter activities alternate between virtual CLEs, luncheons, and other in-person events. See the OWLS website for details. No RSVP necessary. For questions, contact chapter co-chairs Kay Teague or Amanda Thorpe.

## OWLS & WIFS Interprofessional Networking Event

**Part I:** Aug. 22, 4-6 p.m., program begins at 4:30 p.m.

Wells Fargo Tower, 1300 S.W. Fifth Ave., Portland

**Part II:** Sept. 5, 8-9 a.m.

Virtual networking via Zoom

Join OWLS and the Women in Insurance and Financial Services for interprofessional networking, sponsored by Littler Mendelson. Alice Tang, an advocate for female and next-generation professionals, will share tips and techniques for building an inclusive referral network. No cost for either session for OWLS or WIFS

members, \$15 for nonmembers.

**Part I:** [Register online.](#)

**Part II:** [Register online.](#)

## OWLS Office closed

Summer break Aug. 26-Sept. 2

## Lawyers Association of Washington County Luncheon

Sept. 18, noon-1 p.m.

Please join us via Zoom for an illuminating hour about lawyer burnout — how to recognize it and keep it at bay without sacrificing professional success and growth.

[Register online.](#)

## Lane County Women Lawyers & UO – Fall Social

Sept. 26

UO Law, Eugene

Details forthcoming. Save the date!

## Cascade Women Lawyers' Reception with the OWLS Board

Sept. 27, 5 p.m.

Location TBD. Save the date.

## OWLS Online

Oct. 10, noon-1 p.m.

Presented by the Transformation Committee, virtual via Zoom.

**"The Antidote to Perfectionism,"** with guest speaker Heather Decker. Calling all perfectionists and recovering perfectionists. Join us for the sequel to our April OWLS Online program, "Healthy Striving vs. Perfectionism." This time we will learn how to identify and manage perfectionist tendencies. We will explore the costs of and alternatives to perfectionism, and consider when to let our perfectionist flag fly, set and adjust expectations, and discern when "good enough" is the best approach. [RSVP here for October.](#)

## OWLS Annual Fall Conference

Nov. 7

Mark your calendars for the annual OWLS conference. The Fall CLE topic will be on generative AI and the legal system. See also the sponsor brochure on page 23. Fall Reception to follow the CLE.

## No OWLS Online in August



## Summer Unbook Club

By Mary Dougherty

During the summer program break for OWLS Online, consider reading the following books to continue learning strategies to improve accountability.

The first is "White Women" by Regina Jackson and Saira Rao, which asks, "How has being 'nice' helped Black women, Indigenous women, and other women of color? How has being 'nice' helped you in your quest to end sexism? Has being 'nice' earned you economic parity with white men?" The authors deconstruct and analyze nine aspects of traditional

white woman behavior — from tone-policing to weaponizing tears — that uphold white supremacy society and hurt all of us who are trying to live a freer, more equitable life.

Visit [Race2Reading book club](#) to learn about "White Women" and the schedule for author events this summer

The other title, which will be the subject for the OWLS Online program on Dec. 12, is "Say the Right Thing" by Kenji Yoshino and David Glasgow, a practical guide for navigating conversations across differences at a time of rapid social change.

## Expunge

*Continued from page 1*

criminal background check, and a criminal record can make an already difficult home rental market completely impenetrable. If you are applying for a home loan or a student loan, a criminal record can affect eligibility or make rates onerous or unaffordable. Everyday activities like volunteering or getting career certifications can be blocked when a criminal record isn't expunged.

An overhaul to Oregon's expungement laws went into effect in January 2022 and greatly expanded eligibility, while simultaneously simplifying and accelerating the expungement process. Although 1.4 million Oregonians have a criminal record, many don't know if they are eligible for expungement or haven't pursued the process.

Legal Aid Services of Oregon periodically runs criminal expungement clinics in which volunteer attorneys review a client's criminal record, determine eligibility for expungement, and, for those eligible, complete the paperwork for the client to file pro se.

LASO's in-person expungement clinics are generally held every other month. OWLS members who are interested in volunteering at an upcoming clinic can register for an account at Legal Aid's pro bono website: [www.probonoooregon.org](http://www.probonoooregon.org). Volunteer attorneys get access to a resource library with trainings and in-depth learning resources, including CLEs on criminal and eviction expungement.

The OWLS Community Service Committee organizes OWLS members and friends for philanthropic activities and volunteer opportunities and plans to offer participation

in upcoming criminal record expungement clinics and other events, including an Aug. 17 volunteer day with Habitat for Humanity. Reach out to [ayla@cej-oregon.org](mailto:ayla@cej-oregon.org) to get involved.

*Ayla Erzin is the executive director of the Campaign for Equal Justice and is co-chair of the OWLS Community Service Committee.*



Lane County Women Lawyers is accepting nominations for the 6th Annual Chief Justice Martha Walters Award to be presented on Friday, November 15, 2024 at The Gordon Hotel in Eugene. The Award recognizes a Lane County attorney who has demonstrated leadership in the pursuit of equal justice for all. Submit nominations [here](#) through July 31, 2024. If you have any questions about this year's program, please contact us by email [here](#).

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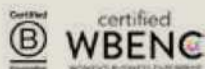
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## Meet Lane County Circuit Court Judge Michelle Bassi

By Kalina Lovell Davis

Judge Michelle Bassi was born and raised in the state of Georgia. She ventured north for undergraduate college at Bowdoin in Maine.

The anticipated allure of a winter in New England proved more daunting and a bit less romantic than expected. Judge Bassi jokes it was probably a good thing she settled in a city that doesn't have an overwhelming amount of snow after four Maine winters.

Law school and an international master's degree program at the University of Oregon brought Judge Bassi across the country from Boston. Oregon won her over when Judge Bassi arrived in Eugene in 2006 and she has remained here

ever since. When deciding to relocate, her now-husband, Brian Bassi, joined the venture west, relocating from New Hampshire. He currently works for the nonprofit Food for Lane County in Eugene.

Diversity of practice areas is a hallmark of Judge Bassi's career as both an attorney and now as a judge. Al-

though she expected to pursue immigration and asylum law when she began her master's and JD programs, the natural beauty and environmental law opportunities took her down a different path. She spent law school summers clerking for environmental justice,

[Continued on page 7](#)



*Clockwise from top: Judge Michelle Bassi with husband Brian, son, and dog on Paulina Peak. Judge Bassi and her son on Mount June, and hiking on a trail through the woods.*



## Judge Bassi

*Continued from page 6*

first with the Southern Environmental Law Center in North Carolina, then the Western Environmental Law Clinic during the school year at Eugene, and a summer with Earth Justice in Denver.

After two years of judicial clerkships, Judge Bassi served as public defender in Roseburg. In 2013, she joined Thorp, Purdy, Jewett, Urness & Wilkinson and developed a general litigation practice, taking on a variety of tasks including family law, trust and estates, and personal injury. Every type of litigation was potentially within her purview at the firm, which kept her constantly learning and engaged. At the time of her appointment to the bench, she resigned from her partnership position with Thorp, Purdy, Jewett, Urness & Wilkinson.

Two years ago, when two vacancies on the Lane County Circuit Court bench became available, Judge Bassi was not eyeing a judicial role. However, multiple community members reached out to her prompting her to seek the position. After about a week of deep but quick consideration, she jumped into the process and applied.

The decision led to an intense summer preparing and applying for a judicial appointment. Judge Bassi relied upon her law community groups, including OWLS and Oregon Trial Lawyers Association (OTLA), to participate in a series of mock interviews.

The Judicial Work Group's "Road to the Bench" handbook was incredibly helpful during the intensive preparation period. Less than three months later, Gov. Kate Brown announced Judge Bassi's and Judge Beatrice Grace's appointments.

The pace and caseload of public defender work is remarkably similar to the judicial docket, and Judge Bassi has found that experience incredibly helpful as she adjusts to the judicial role. Both judges and public defenders often must allocate precious resources of time and attention, along with, at times, rapid decision-making.

According to Judge Bassi, one challenge of the work is trying to meet the community's needs with limited resources. However, this is also what makes the work rewarding. Her docket can vary depending upon the day or term and, like in her private practice career, Judge Bassi could not pinpoint a particular type of case she likes to preside over best.



*Being a mom dominates Judge Michelle Bassi's free time these days. As her son gets older, she and her husband, Brian, look forward to exploring Oregon's natural beauty on more outdoor adventures.*

Although her career did not continue in the environmental law sphere after school, Judge Bassi's favorite part of Oregon life is

the ability to quickly exit the city and immerse oneself in nature.

Judge Bassi acknowledged that mom activities dominate her after-work activities these days. Prior to 2020 when she became a mother, her weekends typically involved hiking, whitewater rafting, and mountain biking, enjoying the Oregon's natural beauty to its fullest with her husband.

While the outdoor adventures have changed since becoming a parent, the family continues their outdoor activities in a modified version with her now 4-year-old son. As he continues developing as a new bicyclist, mountain biking will return to the family's weekend fun.

Parenting has been influential in Judge Bassi's professional life, teaching her greater patience, empathy, and how to remain calm in stressful situations.

Immediately after taking the bench, Judge Bassi entered the November 2022 election to retain the judicial position. Her position was an uncontested election, and she won reelection to a full six-year term.

*Kalina Lovell Davis is an associate attorney at SBH Legal.*



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# OWLS members' judicial appointments

By Megan Breen

## Federal

**H**on. Amy Baggio has been confirmed as a U.S. district judge for the District of Oregon.



Judge Amy Baggio

Upon taking her oath, Judge Baggio will join the court when Judge Marco Hernández assumes senior status on Aug. 21. Judge Baggio will join the Portland Division.

She has served as a judge on the Multnomah County Circuit Court since 2019. Before joining the bench, Judge Baggio practiced criminal defense law in Portland at the Metropolitan Public Defender's Office, Federal Public Defender's Office, and as a solo practitioner. Judge Baggio received her J.D. from Lewis & Clark Law School in 2001 and her B.A., cum laude, from Wake Forest

University in 1995.

Judge Baggio is a member of the Oregon Supreme Court Chief Justice's Criminal Justice Advisory Committee and chair of the Pre-trial Subcommittee. She has served on the Multnomah County Circuit Court's Executive Committee since 2019 and on the Multnomah County Impartial Justice Project since 2021. Judge Baggio is a member of the National Association of Women Judges and Oregon Women Lawyers.

OWLS congratulates Judge Baggio on her appointment and confirmation.

## State

**I**n February, Gov. Tina Kotek appointed Pamela Haan to the Multnomah County Circuit Court. Before her appointment, Judge Haan spent the entirety of her 24-year legal career as a legal aid attorney, most recently serving as a supervising attorney at Legal Aid Services of Oregon's Portland Regional Office.

She earned her bachelor's degree in politi-

cal science from Washington University in St. Louis and her law degree from Lewis & Clark College Law School.

In addition to her legal work, Judge Haan serves on the Executive Committee of the Multnomah County Family Violence Coordinating Council and the Domestic and Sexual Violence Continuum Leadership Council.



Judge Pamela Haan

Judge Haan also served on the Multnomah County Circuit Court Family Court Enhancement Project Management Team from 2014-18 and was part of the Multnomah County Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team, the Multnomah County Domestic Violence Enhanced Response Team Steering Committee, and the Clackamas County Vicarious Trauma Response Initiative.

OWLS congratulates Judge Haan on her recent appointment.

*Megan Breen is an associate at Schwabe, specializing in employment law.*



## Congratulations to Oregon Women Lawyers Foundation

July 2024 Vernellia R. Randall Bar Grant Recipients



Amanda Ray



Camille Sakamoto

To learn more about this grant and other grants, please visit: <https://owlsfoundation.org/>

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Traci Ray is the executive director of Barran Liebman. When she's not busy at work with the law firm, she and her family can usually be found outdoors biking, skiing or pursuing sports of some kind.



In this issue of the AdvanceSheet, we meet Traci Ray. Ray is the executive director of Barran Liebman, an employment, labor and benefits law firm in Portland. Ray also is an OWLS member and a past president of the OWLS Foundation Board.

**Q. If you weren't a lawyer, what would you be?**

**A:** I would coach a professional sports team. I absolutely love sports — the hard work, the team atmosphere, and the excitement of reaching goals. Running a law firm has a lot of similarities to coaching, and in addition to my role at Barran Liebman, I coach some of our children's teams and am the athletic director at St. Pius X School. I played competitive sports growing up, and I have gained many life lessons and leadership skills while participating in team athletics. Anytime I have the opportunity to be a part of a team (at work, in our community, etc.) focused on a shared objective, I am in my happy place.

**Q. What is your favorite book?**

**A:** "The Catcher in the Rye" by J. D. Salinger is one of my favorites. I was gifted

this book as a teenager, and thought it was a great read. I have read it twice since, about a decade in between each read, and it has interested me in different ways each time. I also think the works of Phillip Margolin, a Portland lawyer turned author, are wonderful. I was introduced to his books in law school at the University of Oregon in a class about legal fiction/thrillers, and he's a mastermind of the genre.

**Q. What would someone be surprised to know about you?**

**A:** During COVID, while the schools were instructing remotely, our three children and I would ride bikes every day ... for literally hours every evening, rain or shine. After about a week in, we started logging our hours and tracking how far "across America" we were biking. Well, we rode over 2,000 miles in just over a year (which happens to be roughly the same distance between Portland and Chicago). The kids love Chicago and have been there over a dozen times with me for ABA meetings, so it was a recognizable mileage goal for them. Between the Field Museum and



Millennium Park, the kids were really motivated to make it to our destination. After we crossed the finish line, we bought a Peloton and now we can ride all over the world.

*The Lighter Side of the Law is a fun AdvanceSheet feature to get to know members of the OWLS legal community in a different way than you may experience them in the courtroom or the conference room. In each issue, you will find an OWLS member answering lighter questions to get to know them better.*

— Ayla Ercin





# Meet OWLS board member Gina Ko

By Elizabeth Lemoine



**"I think the pieces are there for (OWLS) to become an organization that truly and powerfully focuses on lifting up women and underrepresented groups in our profession and in our communities."**

— Gina Ko

OWLS board member Gina Ko believes that OWLS is at a pivotal point in its history, determining the organization's role moving forward in a post-COVID era. She joined the board about a year ago with a desire to help guide OWLS to more sharply focus on programming and advocacy that furthers the OWLS mission.

Fortunately for all of us, Ko's life experience will no doubt provide valuable insight and guidance to the board leadership for the betterment of the OWLS organization.

Ko's parents emigrated in the 1970s from South Korea. Born and raised in Oregon, first in Lincoln City and then in the Beaverton/Tigard area, Ko and her family belonged to a small Korean American community where everybody knew one another and young people were encouraged to study to become doctors, lawyers or accountants.

After graduating from Westview High School, Ko attended college at UC Irvine, which she described as "a complete culture

shock" due to the large Asian population at the school. During college, Ko began to explore both her Korean roots and her distinctly Asian American identity for the first time.

It was this exploration of her cultural and ethnic heritage during her college years, followed by a year of teaching English abroad, that ultimately led Ko to the practice of law. While teaching in South Korea, she met people who were passionate about the principles of law and politics, and situations that challenged her long-held beliefs about what "normal life" could look like.

For example, South Korean citizens appeared to enjoy both universal health care and exceptional health care institutions, with less deducted in taxes for that benefit than the monthly health care premiums she was used to paying at home. This challenged Ko's belief that universal health care would be an unreasonably costly effort that leads only to bad health care, and led her to take the LSAT

upon her return to the United States and then enroll in law school.

In her first year, Ko had the opportunity to intern for the Honorable Judge Inez Smith Reid at the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. Judge Smith Reid taught Ko the power of attitude and extraordinary competence, what it looked like to walk into every room with quiet confidence, and the importance of mentoring the next generation.

Ko anticipated following Judge Smith Reid's example with a career in public service, but graduated from the George Washington School of Law just in time to see legal jobs evaporate. After multiple employers advised her that they would be freezing hiring for the next year, Ko made the decision to move home to the family farm in Oregon. However, she ended up working for a small law firm, instead of growing raspberries and has not looked back since.

Ko is currently working as a senior associate at Reinisch Wilson, where she practices Washington State workers' compensation defense and advises on adjacent employment law issues.

JoJo Keating, a former colleague and now longtime friend of Ko's, remarked: "I had the pleasure of working with Gina at two separate law firms. She's one of those rare people who successfully combine a relentlessly chipper attitude and a deep well of competence. She's a great co-worker and a great friend. I feel privileged to be in her orbit."

Ko and her husband have two young children. Spending time with family is very important to her. In that respect, Ko is grateful to work for a woman-led, family-focused employer that provides her with the flexibility to try to find a healthy work/life balance.

Her guiding advice for other young lawyers looking to balance a litigation career and family life is to find an employer willing to



Gina Ko and her husband, Jeff, have two children. They enjoy trying new foods, getting outdoors, visiting the Beaverton Farmers Market, and just being together. (Gina Ko)

[Continued on page 12](#)

## Spring CLE

# Tools to foster support, inclusivity

By Michelle Ryan

**O**n April 30, OWLS hosted an interactive CLE session titled "Cultivating Inclusion at OWLS Events" via Zoom. The training, led by Jill Long and Teresa Jacobs from Glassman Consulting, and Heather Van Meter from Miller Nash, focused on enhancing empathetic listening and handling difficult messages, particularly for those involved in planning or facilitating events for lawyers.

The session also covered ORPC 8.4(a)(7) and the OWLS Event Code of Conduct, with participants earning CLE credit for access to justice.

The first half of the event began with a mindfulness exercise and established a set of agreements to foster a respectful and in-



clusive environment. Participants engaged in breakout sessions to discuss assumptions and expectations, emphasizing the importance of empathetic listening. A highlight was a video by Brene Brown on empathy, underscoring the power of connection and vulnerability.

The second half reviewed the OWLS code of conduct, stressing the importance of mutual

understanding and appropriate behavior at events. Jacobs remarked, "You never have just one tool."

Through education, conversation, and engagement, problematic behavior should decrease. As skillfulness and awareness increase, we can communicate better with one another.

Those seeking further education should read "Nonviolent Communication" by Marshall Rosenberg and "Say the Right Thing: How to Talk About Identity, Diversity, and Justice" by Kenji Yoshino and David Glasgow.

Overall, the CLE session provided attendees with practical tools and insights to create a more inclusive and supportive environment at OWLS events.

Chief Justice Meagan Flynn welcomed new lawyers to the Oregon State Bar on May 14 at Willamette University in Salem.



## OWLS welcomes new lawyers to bar

By Marisa Moneyhun

**O**n May 14, OWLS was present to welcome the admission of new lawyers to the Oregon State Bar. The ceremony was held by the Supreme Court of Oregon at Willamette University, in Salem.

Justice Aruna Masih encouraged new attorneys to be guided by the following principles as they embark on their legal careers:

- To embrace curiosity.
- To let compassion be a guiding force.
- To strive for cultural competencies in all elements of practicing law.

■ And, most of all, to go out and be the lawyer you dreamed of being!

The admission of new lawyers was followed by a reception at Willamette University College of Law where new attorneys were able to meet representatives from different practice sections and affinity bars, including the Oregon Women Lawyers.

Congratulations to the newest members of the Oregon State Bar!

**Marisa Moneyhun, OWLS president, is a partner at Kehoe Moneyhun Law.**

**Ko**

[Continued from page 11](#)

look at and discuss short- and long-term goals that allow their attorneys to progress at their own pace and who supports them in drawing a firm line between work time and family time. Finding reliable child care is also a must.

During her personal and family time, which she guards fiercely, Ko, her husband, Jeff, and their two children (who are 6 and 4 years old), enjoy camping, getting outdoors, trying new foods, and spending time together. The family has planned several camping expeditions this summer at their favorite camping spots, which include La Pine State Park, Detroit Lake, and Fort Stevens.

When Ko is not working, spending time with her family, or advocating for a cause, she loves to grab coffee with friends, visit the Beaverton Farmers Market, and relax by the pool at her gym.

Ko is excited to use her

unique experiences and perspective to help guide the OWLS board into its next chapter. The OWLS mission is "[T]o transform the legal profession by pursuing equitable access to the legal system and equity for women and communities who are systemically oppressed."

Ko strongly believes in this mission, and hopes her tenure on the OWLS board will help OWLS to chart strategic paths to achieve its goals. She believes that OWLS is a great organization and could be even greater moving forward.

"OWLS is such an amazing organization, and I think the pieces are there for it to become an organization that truly and powerfully focuses on lifting up women and underrepresented groups in our profession and in our communities. I am grateful for the opportunity to advocate for that goal."

OWLS is lucky to have her.

**Elizabeth Lemoine is an attorney partner at Lemoine Legal Services.**



# Ethan Smith

By Kristie Gibson

Ethan Smith has been selected as a 2024 Multnomah Bar Association Bar Fellow through the MBA Bar Fellows Program.

The program is highly selective and is designed to recruit and support diverse law students who are committed to practicing law in Oregon. One of the opportunities the program provides is a first-summer paid internship. Smith will intern with Legal Aid Services of Oregon (LASO), with sponsorship support from the OWLS Foundation.

Smith is a rising second-year student at the University of Oregon School of Law. He earned his undergraduate degree in history, with minors in pre-law and political science, at the Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla, Missouri, in 2020.

Inspired by his mother, a nurse and single parent, Smith devoted time to impactful work in the rural community in which he lived while working and pursuing his undergraduate degrees. He worked as a campaign manager for a Missouri state House race and with local candidates in central Missouri. Smith has always been inspired to do work that creates connections and brings positive change to his community.

Smith took time between his undergraduate work and law school to work with legislative groups in Wisconsin and Montana, including working as a candidate services manager with the Democratic Party of Wisconsin.

In 2023, he managed a legislative action program focused on voter rights advocacy. He also worked in support of tribal cultural community programs in Montana. Smith's engagement in civics and the legislative process were among the catalysts that motivated him to pursue a career in law.

Smith is also a social entrepreneur. He started New Cosmos Records in a garage in Helena, Montana, in 2021. Now based in Eugene, the business creates limited artistic records and liquid-filled records for early-stage bands. Smith is passionate about supporting artists who are just starting out in the industry.

Now that Smith has completed his first



# MBA Bar Fellow

in work that may be life-changing for those with whom he will work at LASO.

Smith is grateful to the MBA, the OWLS Foundation, and LASO for supporting his work in Portland. He is looking forward to working and living in Portland and engaging with the community.

"I'm just incredibly grateful for the opportunity to work with LASO doing meaningful work and getting to explore Portland this summer," Smith said.

The OWLS Foundation appreciates the donors whose contributions provide support for law students to participate in practice-focused experiences.

*Kristie Gibson is an OWLS Foundation board member.*

year of law school, he is beginning to explore practice areas. Once admitted to practice, he will be the first attorney in his family. Opportunities like the MBA Bar Fellows Program provide an avenue for law students, like Smith, to experience potential career paths, create professional connections, and engage



# Lane County holds 25th annual spring clothing drive, CLE

By Jeslyn Everitt

On April 18, Lane County Women Lawyers (LCWL) hosted its annual spring clothing drive and CLE. More than 40 participants attended the social hour, which was generously sponsored by Larwick Law Firm, and included drinks, appetizers, and time for socializing and community building.

The event, held at the Old Spaghetti Factory in Eugene, was a throwback to the 1990s. In 1999, the Oregon Bar implemented the child abuse reporting requirement CLE, and later that year the Lane County Women Lawyers (LCWL) hosted its first-ever CLE and social hour on that topic at the Oregon Electric Station.

Now, 25 years later, the LCWL recreated the event with the same CLE topic. The CLE was co-presented by experts from the Oregon Department of Justice, including Elder Abuse Resource Prosecutor Christian Stringer and Attorney in Charge of the Child Advocacy and Protection Division Michelle Watkins.

Event participants brought over 40 bags of lightly worn professional clothing that were donated to local nonprofits the Hope & Safety Alliance, which provides advocacy and other services to survivors of domestic and sexual violence, and Looking Glass, which provides services to community members struggling with educational deficits, behavioral health issues, drug addiction, and homelessness.

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



Above: The Lane County Women Lawyers clothing drive brought in over 40 bags of professional clothing, which were donated to local nonprofits.



Left and below: The 25th annual CLE drew dozens to socialize and hear about mandatory reporting on abuse of a child, elder, or vulnerable adult.

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# Lane County bar honors several OWLS members

By Jeslyn Everitt

**O**n May 2, the Lane County Bar Association hosted its annual spring bash at the Veterans Memorial Building in Eugene. The event honored the recipients of three awards:

■ **Joseph M. Kosydar Award for Professionalism:** This honor went to OWLS member Shannon Richard, who served 17 years as Assistant Attorney General with the Oregon Department of Justice and remains an invaluable contributor in her current role as Assistant Attorney in Charge at the Division of Child Support.

As noted in her nomination, Richard is a well-prepared, vigorous advocate with a commitment to fairness and just results. Described as “a quiet leader in our community, one who leads by example, not seeking attention for her work,” Richard is committed to pursuing justice and treating all parties with respect.

In addition to her work at DOJ, Richard serves on the Lane County Family Law Advisory Committee, which provides the circuit court



*From left, Hon. Judge Karrie K. McIntyre, Hon. Judge Deborah E. Velure, Retired Chief Justice Martha Lee Walters, and attorney Shannon Richard.*

with feedback to improve court processes and service to litigants. She also has served as chair and co-chair of the local OWLS chapter Lane County Women Lawyers Steering Committee, where she brings together members of the community for annual events such as the Spring CLE and social hour, fall networking event, and Chief Justice Martha Walters luncheon.

This award was established in memory of Joseph Kosydar, a longtime Lane County deputy district attorney, to recognize attorneys who exemplify professionalism and civility.

■ **Distinguished Service Award:** This award went to two recipients, OWLS member the Honorable Karrie K. McIntyre and the Honorable Charles M. Zennaché, who both serve as circuit court judges with the Lane County Circuit Court. Judge McIntyre has served since 2015, and prior to that was a partner at Parrish & McIntyre, where she specialized in family law. Judge McIntyre has also served as chair of the Lane County Local Family Law Advisory Committee (LFLAC) since 2011, has chaired Oregon’s State Family Law Advisory Committee (SFLAC) since 2019, and has contributed time to educating lawyers with CLEs and service on the Oregon State Bar Futures Committee.

Judge Zennaché has served as a Circuit Court Judge with the Lane County Circuit Court since 2017.

The award honors individuals who have provided extraordinary service to the legal profession and the people of Lane County.

■ **Andrew Clement Pro Bono Award:** This honor went to John VanLandingham, who has spent over 40 years defending and advocating for the rights of tenants and underserved Oregonians at the Lane County Legal Aid/Oregon Law Center. The award recognizes an individual who has provided exceptional service to people of limited means.

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

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# Kids learn the ropes of the real world on Bring Your Child to Work Day

By Erika Maxon

**O**n April 25, the Multnomah County Circuit Court Juvenile Hearings Team and Department of Community Justice Juvenile Services Division hosted the second annual Bring Your Child to Work Day.

Volunteers provided mock trial coaching, and OWLS staff assisted with event planning and promotion and supplied snacks and gavel pencils.

Thank you to Michele DesBrisay, pro tem judge and juvenile hearings referee, and Kyla Armstrong-Romero, Juvenile Services Division director, for organizing the schedule of activities held at the Juvenile Justice Complex in Northeast Portland.

*Erika Maxon is OWLS program coordinator.*



*Hon. Joseph Hagedorn stands with some of the kids who took part in Bring Your Child to Work Day on April 25 at the Juvenile Justice Complex in Northeast Portland. (Michelle DesBrisay photos)*



*Judge Morgan Long and her son, Harrison, in Judge Long's courtroom at the Juvenile Justice Complex.*



*In the case of the stolen designer shoes, an Italian exchange student questions her friend, an exchange student from Brazil, who served as a witness.*



*Attorney Kelly Neilan, seen with Jayden Ritchie, served as a coach for the defense team.*



*Attorney Lauren Kemp works with Orsen Keating during Bring Your Child to Work Day on April 25.*



## Shortlisted

# *The Furies: Women, Vengeance, and Justice*

By Elizabeth Flock  
(Penguin Books, 2024, 304 pages)

Book review by Tiffany Hendrix  
Blackmon

As I pored through "The Furies," I found myself copiously highlighting text for the first time since I graduated law school. But instead of the elements of a tort or the holding of a case, my highlights on this occasion were far more interesting.

First, I found myself highlighting the names of women who had taken vengeance and justice into their own hands. I wanted to research more about their stories after I finished the book. Each chapter, the list grew as more women's lives were mentioned throughout the three core stories. Phoolan Devi, the "Bandit Queen." Francine Hughes. Tracey Grissom. Inez Garcia. Joan Little. Amy Herrera. Debi Zuver. Cyntoia Brown. Alisha Walker. Cece McDonald. Willie Mae Harris. Tewkunzi Green. Maddesyn George. Tammy Keel. Nikki Addimando.

The stories of some, like Devi, have been documented by the media. But, I was surprised as my list of names grew, that I did not recognize most of them. Even the most shocking of the stories were unfamiliar to me. My own lack of knowledge about these women's lives demonstrates the importance of "The Furies."

Next, I found myself highlighting powerful quotes, compelling data, and information I wanted to look into further. Data such as, "The 'abuse to prison pipeline' is today a much-studied phenomenon. A 2010 study on a female Illinois prison population found that, before arriving in prison, an incredible 98 percent of women said they had experienced physical violence, 85 percent had been stalked or emotionally abused, and 75 percent had been sexually abused." Several lines stuck with me, including, "Ideas, like people, die if we don't fight for them," and "Nonviolence is a privilege."

"The Furies" is broken into three sections, labeled books, which tell the stories of three women and examines how and why they used violence to fight back against injustices. Book 1 pulls the reader in with a linear and straightforward story that is just one example of the

challenges women too often face in rural towns in America.

It documents the story of Brittany Smith, a young woman from a small town in Alabama, who shot and killed the man who raped her. Book 1 weaves the tale, explaining Smith's history, her family's challenges, and the role her town's culture played in how her case unfolded. It addresses how many women never report crimes that are committed against them, and how few get justice even when they report the crimes.

I found myself reading quickly through Book 1, to find out what happened to Smith. She asserted a Stand-Your-Ground defense, which the judge rejected. Book 1 discussed the challenges women often face when attempting to assert this type of defense, and other barriers women face in the legal system, such as dealing with judges who are not trauma informed. I read on, hoping for the outcome I desired for Smith, but knowing the more likely result of the case was one I would not be satisfied with. Smith's story is compelling and stuck with me as I continued on to the next sections. Book 1 was also the most graphic. There are several parts that those who dislike reading the details of sexual violence will want to skip over.

Book 2 details the story of Angoori Dahariya, who decided to fight back after she and her children were beaten and evicted from their home. She led a gang of women in India, known as the Green Gang, dedicated to solving cases for women. The Green Gang was

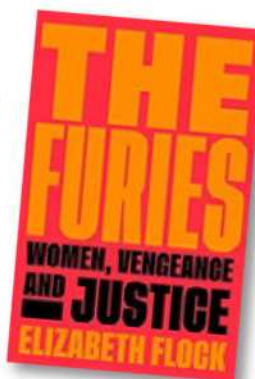
composed of primarily low-caste women, who wore green saris and wielded canes. They often helped women who had been unable to get any assistance with issues like domestic violence. The stories were important, interesting ones that I am glad were shared.

However, Book 2 takes on a large number of stories that were intertwined with Dahariya's. It discusses multiple other women who led gangs or engaged in their own vigilante justice in India, and shares details about many different women in the Green Gang. I found myself lost among the different names and interconnected stories on a few occasions. While I found it more difficult to follow, Book 2 provided valuable insight into India's cultural norms and legal system.

While Book 1 provided a lot of emotional details and personal insight into Smith's life and her family, Book 2 is more impersonal. It provides a lot of historical background and details about related issues impacting women in India, and focuses less on the personal details of Dahariya's life. I appreciated the context the author shared, and the effort she put in as a journalist to uncover information.

I was astounded to read that in 2013, there were 31 million court cases that were open and unresolved in India. Many women who were impacted by the ongoing backlog sought the help of the Green Gang. Even staff who worked within the court system recommended the Green Gang as a means of circumventing

[Continued on page 18](#)



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## Shortlisted

[Continued from page 17](#)

the troubled legal system. Book 2 painted a picture that helps the reader understand why women in these situations turned to the Green Gang's unconventional methods and violence after their legal system failed them.

I was moved by several of the stories of women who had to seek assistance from the Green Gang after ongoing abuse by their families. But I ended the book unsure I understood how Dahariya had gotten to the point where she led a gang, was entwined

with politicians, and then ultimately largely left her role as an advocate.

Book 3 follows Cicek Mustafa Zibo, a member of an all-female militia, the Women's Protection Units, that battled ISIS in Syria. Similar to Book 2, this book incorporates a lot of history and cultural information, and details many different women's stories. It shares more personal details about Zibo. I thought Book 3 had the best mix of historical, cultural, and personal aspects. It dives into Zibo's childhood, family relationships, and the issues within her community that led her to join the military. It discusses her inner

thoughts as she grappled with her ability to fight for a cause she vehemently believed in while reeling from the loss of friends and loved ones and dealing with her own trauma.

Like the journalist who stated they were astounded that a region in northern Syria "ruled by militant feminist anarchists" wasn't getting more attention in 2015, I, too, was surprised as I read Book 3 by how much of the information was new to me. I knew little of Rojava, the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria.

I learned a coed university was opened in this city, Qamishli, and later a town for women and children was founded, called Jinwar. "Maja Jin," or "Women's House," was a network of women-run houses, which provided a place for women to report and receive assistance with issues they faced at home, like domestic violence. Rojava also passed a "Women's Law" that outlaws many of the old practices that had harmed women, such as polygamy and the dowry system. Rojava was labeled a feminist, egalitarian experiment, and many thought Rojava could be a model for autonomous rule and direct democracy elsewhere.

Overall, I certainly found the book to be worth the time it took to read. Some sections flowed better than others, but even the more disjointed parts that were harder to get through provided important information and stories. Perhaps just as importantly, it inspires the reader to research the issues, history, and cases further. After I finished the book, I spent time reading more on many of the women whose names I had just learned thanks to "The Furies."

Smith, Dahariya, and Zibo all have complicated stories. They were subjected to injustices and they each responded with violence — Smith with a gun, Dahariya with a gang wielding canes, and Zibo with a militia equipped with Kalashnikov and other weapons. Each woman "sought to change the status quo, yet never fully escaped the oppressive systems they grew up in and continue to live under."

The parallels between the three women's lives, and the issues in the three different countries, was one of the most interesting aspects of the book. Each woman made significant impacts in their communities, but their battles rage on. Women continue to rally around the Kurdish slogan: "Women, life, freedom."

*Tiffany Hendrix Blackmon serves as general counsel for Cascadia Health.*

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To learn more about the Foundation, our grants, or to donate, please visit

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



# 2,500 books collected for women at Coffee Creek

By Ashley R. Fraley

Coffee Creek Correctional Facility (CCCF) is a prison that houses both men and women. CCCF offers the adults in custody several rehabilitation programs, including but not limited to vocational, life skills, and parenting and family training.

Throughout June, OWLS members collected books to donate to CCCF to provide the inmates with fresh reading materials. Because of the sheer amount of use the books receive, CCCF requested new or like-new books.

As a result, the OWLS Community Service Committee, spearheaded by Keturah Taylor, was uncertain about how many books they would receive.

However, as usual, the OWLS community did not disappoint. On May 30 and 31, books collected at donation sites in several counties were dropped off at Gevurtz Menashe in Portland. The law firm kindly offered their space as the collection and sorting location for all the donated books. Approximately 4,000 books were donated.

On June 2, OWLS members gathered at Gevurtz Menashe to sort through the huge donation and ensure the books met the guidelines set out by CCCF. After several hours of sorting, OWLS donated 2,500 books



Above, some of the books that didn't make the cut.

From left, Meg Huntington, Jana Triska, Ashley Fraley, and Keturah Taylor help winnow about 4,000 books that were collected down to 2,500 that were donated to the Coffee Creek Correctional Facility.

to CCCF and the remainder were dispersed to Goodwill facilities throughout the city.

This was a great success! Well done,

OWLS!

Ashley R. Fraley is an associate attorney at Gevurtz Menashe.

Gina Ko, left, and Shelby Smith stack books that were donated by OWLS members at collection sites in several counties.



Kathryn Root sorts through donated books at the Gevurtz Menashe offices.



*Adele Ridenour, OWLS immediate past president and emcee, and Judge Maalik Summer at the ceremony where Judge Summer and Juan Chavez received the 2024 Roberts & Deiz Award at the Leftbank Annex in Portland on May 31.*



*Brittney Plesser accepts the 2024 Roberts & Deiz Award on behalf of Juan Chavez, who was unable to attend the ceremony.*

## Roberts & Deiz Award

[\*Continued from page 1\*](#)

disabilities.

Justice Roberts served as a leader and mentor in the Oregon political and legal communities, becoming the first female appointee to the Oregon appellate bench. Judge Deiz was a trailblazer, working tirelessly to create opportunities for people in marginalized communities. She was the first Black woman admitted to the Oregon bar and the first woman of color on the Oregon bench.

This year, OWLS honored Juan Chavez, the Oregon Justice Resource Center's Civil Rights Project director, and Judge Maalik Summer, with the Washington County Circuit Court. Chavez and Judge Summer exemplify the qualities admired in both Justice Roberts and Judge Deiz. They have provided leadership, mentorship, and guidance to vulnerable populations. They embody the OWLS mission to transform the legal professional by pursuing equitable access to the legal system and equity for women and communities who are systematically oppressed.

### Juan Chavez

Chavez is a dedicated and powerful advocate for people who are incarcerated, those with mental illness or other disabilities, and individuals who have been harmed by the state. He takes care to guide work at the Civil Rights Project to balance client-centered cases with cases that have broader impacts on justice for all. Chavez is respected not only for being

one of the few attorneys in the state who regularly takes on civil rights cases for adults in custody, but for doing so in a professional, civil manner that amplifies the voices of the marginalized communities.

Chavez's advocacy has helped such clients as the Mental Health Alliance, peaceful protesters, people experiencing houselessness, and families of people affected by police violence. Chavez mentors queer and BIPOC law students and young lawyers, while encouraging self-care and mental well-being, all while modeling kindness, humility, and dedication to advocating for others.

Chavez's award introduction video began with an interview with civil rights attorney, J. Ashlee Albies of Albies & Stark, who has known Chavez since he was in law school. Next was Tereasa Raiford, executive director of Don't Shoot Portland, who knows Chavez through the nonprofit's work for social justice. Following Raiford was Bobbin Singh, executive director of the Oregon Justice Resource Center (OJRC). Singh said he first heard of Chavez when the lawyer had a solo practice, noting that Chavez caught his eye because the work he was doing aligned with the values of the OJRC. Singh said that "Oregon should be very proud of the type of work that he's doing and the things that he represents."

Shannon Vincent of the Oregon Department of Justice then spoke about Chavez's work with marginalized communities. For over a decade, Vincent said, she has worked "across the aisle" from Chavez' in civil rights litigation filed by adults in custody against the state.

Albies noted that many of Chavez's cases have garnered national attention, not just because they are difficult, "but because they are righteous cases, and he brings this kind of moral authority to the work that he does." Albies also said Chavez is very humble and has his clients' interests at heart and "he strives to protect and advocate for those interests."

Vincent added that "Juan really exemplifies the legacies of Justice Roberts and Judge Deiz because he has dedicated his whole professional life to working for people who are at the margins of society." While Raiford said, "I don't think (Chavez's) work as a lawyer, as a legal professional, is focused on just getting things right. I think that he has a love for humanity that shines through his work. ... The encouragement that he provides to his clients and families and communities makes us want to be more confident in the way we assert our rights." The fact that he shows up, Raiford said, is a big deal. He is fighting "with his whole heart."

Due to an injury, Chavez was unable to attend the ceremony, sending his close colleague Brittney Plesser to accept the award on his behalf. Plesser started by amusing the audience with a warning that there were jokes in Chavez's remarks that she did not write "so they won't land." Chavez's acceptance noted that he does not work alone. He mentioned his colleagues by name saying that they have kept him going, "feeling brave enough to continue working, even when I feel like I've lost the thread."

The prison litigation community is small and Chavez thanked the mentors who have



been with him throughout his career. “I regret to say it out loud, but even though I am an antifa anarchist out to fight the evils of the hierarchy, I do, in fact, love my boss,” referring to Singh, who brought him to the OJRC and with whom he started the organization’s Civil Rights Project.

Chavez said that none of his mentors, colleagues or loved ones ask him to be anyone other than himself. “Our politics, our carceral system, our war machine, our economy operates on forcing loneliness and alienation from one another, on making you feel alone when you actually aren’t. Some of my clients only have four brick walls to stare at 23½ hours a day. It’s grueling, it’s cruel, and it’s our duty as their representatives to remind them that they are not alone.”

### Judge Maalik Summer

Judge Summer is an advocate for people who are underrepresented, including those in the Black, LGBTQIA, and the deaf communities. As a lawyer, Judge Summer dedicated his career to helping others — not just clients but colleagues, attorneys, and others. As a judge, he continues his dedication to helping those in marginalized communities by ensuring DEI principles, cultural competency, and recognition of bias as considerations.

Judge Summer advocates for improvements to the courtroom, such as upgrading remote capabilities, assistive listening technologies, and consideration of how policy and technology changes underrepresented communities. Judge Summer also serves as a mentor for young BIPOC lawyers and seeks to uplift those who may be struggling or lacking confidence.

Judge Summer’s award introduction video began with an interview with University of Oregon Law School classmate Laura Salerno Owens, firm president at Markowitz Herbold in Portland. Beaverton Municipal Court Judges Juliet Britton and Zohra Bakhtary Tourville followed, describing working with Judge Summer on their bench.

Judge Rebecca Guptill, presiding judge in Washington County Circuit Court talked about how Judge Summer helps “to make people feel more comfortable in his presence” and about his bravery “having made a transition as openly as possible,” giving people a safe space to be themselves and understand that that’s going to be accepted in his courtroom.

Judge Summer is a transgender man who leads by example and, Judge Guptill says, is “a huge thing for ... our legal community”



OWLS Roberts & Deiz Award Committee members at the May 31 event included: front row, from left, Alejandra Torres, Lizz Esfeld (co-chair), Adele Ridenour; back row, from left, Sunny Sidman, Linda Tomassi, and Mimi Luong.

and the community, in general. Judge Tourville described Judge Summer as selfless and generous” and Judge Britton said “he prioritizes people’s equity and access over having a quick docket.”

Salerno Owens said, “I have never seen anyone who can build community as well as Judge Summer. I think it’s in part because he’s such a joyful person” who “really wants to bring people in” and help them feel included. She described him as being “an incredible mentor and a huge source of inspiration for many of us.”

In his acceptance speech, Judge Summer said, “This may be the most important speech I’ve ever done,” so he wrote it down, something uncharacteristic. “This is a platonic love letter to all of you,” he said.

Judge Summer never met a lawyer before attending law school. He recalled his first OWLS dinner, where he sat next to “some guy,” who spent time talking with him and was interested in what he had to say. The guy was Judge Douglas V. Van Dyk, who gave him his card and told him they should have lunch some time. Summer never did reach out, but hit a nerve with the audience when he told the law students in attendance that “we mean it when we say that. It’s so nice to spend time with you. You’re still excited and optimistic, and it reminds us to be good.”

Judge Summer thanked the Washington County Bench, which welcomed him and made him “feel like he belongs somewhere.”

“Transitioning is no small thing, and I did not mean to experience it publicly, but that is ultimately what happened,” adding that he “didn’t expect so many fist bumps — at the court, at the gym. The gentlemen lawyers did not disappoint.”

Judge Summer spoke of the importance of community and collegiality, “but caring for each other is an inspired and loving act, and with that kind of support, we can accomplish great things.” Judge Summer said he feels cared for every day by this community and does a better job because of it. He encouraged everyone to be more than collegial — to be kind — and that those kindnesses will be remembered.

With another joyful celebration in the books, OWLS looks forward to seeing everyone next year. Nominations for the Roberts & Deiz Award can be submitted through Dec 5. [Click here for a nomination form for the 2025 award.](#)

*Alex Rhee is an associate at Markowitz Herbold in Portland and a member of the Roberts & Deiz Award Committee.*

*Linda Tomassi is the executive director of Oregon Women Lawyers.*



# Time to rest, recharge? *SWEET!*

By Kay Teague

**O**n May 1, the folks at Heritage Bank sponsored a relaxing night out for OWLS. The Lawyers Association of Washington County teamed up with OWLS' JoJo Keating of [Cake Hoopla](#) to treat attendees to sweets without stress.

For a couple of hours, OWLS members from multiple chapters each decorated a half-dozen cupcakes. Keating provided us with professional tools and guidance to create our owl-themed desserts with Cake Hoopla's heart-stopping buttercream frosting. Also on tap were delicious beverages,



adult and otherwise, and a photo booth for folks to enjoy.

Often, organizations' events for lawyers leave us feeling like we still have to be "on" with colleagues outside the office.

At this event, instead of worrying about networking, members wondered whether the fondant would ruin the vibe of their cupcake, or how to get the owl stamp to work without smudging. The stakes were low because it was all going to be extraordinarily delicious in the end.

I honestly cannot recall the last time that I had so much fun on a weekday or at some "lawyer



(Kay Teague)

event." It was also nice to experience other sides of our colleagues and see the incredible artists among us. Thank you, Heritage Bank and Cake Hoopla, for the time and opportunity to rest, recharge, and have some fun.

If you're interested, Cake Hoopla is a local cake/cupcake-decorating studio in Tigard that offers patrons the space and creativity to make delicious art without the mess. Cake Hoopla provides a studio and event space to host your next event or party, DIY cake- and cupcake-decorating kits, pre-decorated cake orders, workshops, and gift cards.

We know we will be back in the future for more deliciously relaxing nights.

*Kay Teague is a partner at KT Law.*



(Kay Teague)



A relaxing, fun time was had by all May 1 when OWLS members got together for a cupcake-decorating party at Cake Hoopla in Tigard. (Kay Teague)

Cake Hoopla owner JoJo Keating hosted the evening's festivities at her studio in Tigard. (Mary Dougherty)



(Kay Teague)





Thursday, November 7, 2024  
CLE: 1:00-4:30pm | Reception 4:30-6:00pm  
Portland

OWLS Fall CLE

**The Impact of Generative Artificial Intelligence and the Legal System** *(working title)*

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