

# **RHODE ISLAND WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION**

## **MARCH 2022 NEWSLETTER** 🌸

\*\*\* If any members have information on how we can best assist Ukrainian refugees (or groups looking for assistance in representing refugees generally), in our capacities as members of the bar or otherwise, please send them to [us](#) for sharing with our membership list. \*\*\*

### **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

#### **The Rhode Island Bar Association Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee**

After reviewing the recommendation from the Bar's Task Force on Diversity & Inclusion, the Bar's Executive Committee would like to hear from Bar members interested in joining and regularly attending meetings of a proposed Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. This Committee would seek the participation of all interested members of the Bar to discuss DEI-related matters of interest to the membership and to make recommendations that will foster a sense of equity and inclusion among members. The Committee will also propose DEI-related CLE and Annual Meeting programming, networking events with affinity legal organizations, and resources for the membership. At least thirty members must volunteer to serve on the committee which would be formed on an ad hoc basis for at least two years to determine if interest is sustainable. Members have until April 1 to respond. Anyone interested is instructed to email [sgutierrez@ribar.com](mailto:sgutierrez@ribar.com) to express interest in serving on the Committee.

#### **Roger Williams School of Law Thurgood Marshall Memorial Lecture**

##### **March 3rd, 4pm Virtual**

Featuring University of Virginia Professor, Kimberly Jenkins Robinson, author of *Federal Right to Education: Fundamental Questions for Our Democracy*. In her book, Robinson brought together some of the nation's leading law and education scholars to examine why the United States should consider recognizing a federal right to education, how the United States could recognize such a right, and what the right should guarantee. In 2015, Harvard Education Press published her co-edited book with Professor Charles Ogletree Jr. of Harvard Law School titled *The Enduring Legacy of Rodriguez: Creating New Pathways to Equal Educational Opportunity*. Scholars analyzed the impact of the 1972 United States Supreme Court decision *San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodriguez*, which held that the U.S. Constitution does not protect a right to education. Register [here](#).

#### **Introduction to Focus and Mindfulness Practice for Stress Reduction**

##### **March 8, 12-1:30pm, Virtual**

A CLE Program sponsored by the RWU Law Alumni Association.

In this session, Professor David Zlotnick will introduce lawyers to the theory and practice of mindfulness as a tool for managing stress, improving focus, and maintaining equanimity despite the challenges of legal practice. Professor Zlotnick believes in learning-by-doing. Therefore, this will be an interactive program in which participants will be given multiple, short opportunities to try different mindfulness practices to get a taste of what might work for each individual. Registration [here](#).

**#IamRemarkable, Tuesday, March 22 from 8:45am-10:30am**

Hosted by Center for Women & Enterprise and facilitated by Women's Fund of Rhode Island. During the webinar, you will learn about research regarding self-promotion and unconscious bias, and how to detail and articulate your achievements and practice self promotion. [Register here](#).

**RWU Third Annual Women in Law Leadership Lecture**

March 22, 5-6pm, hybrid in-person and virtual

A fireside chat with Amy Barasch, Esq., Executive Director of Her Justice, a non-profit connecting low income women and children with legal needs in the areas of matrimonial, family and immigration law with pro bono counsel. Registration information available [here](#).

**RIWBA CLE: New Challenges, New Laws: State Legislation That Affects Women & Families in a Post-COVID World., March 21 at 12:30 p.m.**

This is the first CLE in our annual series, and will feature Senator Ana Quezada, Senator Dawn Euer, and Representative Susan Donovan in a discussion moderated by Lilia Kirtley Holt about recent Rhode Island legislation affecting women and families. Keep an eye on your inbox for the formal invitation!

**RIWBA NEWSMAKER Event, April 7**

(evening)

We are excited to spotlight Julie Hamil, the first woman to serve as state court administrator in Rhode Island! Save the date. Event details to follow shortly!



## **MEMBERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS:**

**Thank you** to the members who joined us for our recent Coffee & Conversation event at riffraff bookstore + bar! It was a fun, relaxing evening full of cocktails, hot chocolate, new books to read and podcasts to listen to, and good company.

RIWBA Board Member **Lisa Kresge** and her team secured a \$ 1.4 million dollar judgment for their Connecticut-based bank client at the RI Supreme Court in a multi-state, statute of limitations matter. Learn more about the case [here](#). Nice job!

**LaTri-c-ea McClendon-Hunt** was promoted to Senior Counsel at Pannone Lopes Devereaux & O'Gara LLC. Learn more about her practice [here](#). Congrats!

**RIWBA Book Club:** Please take a moment to provide feedback on our book club as we seek to make the subject matter and timing work best for our members. Short survey available [here](#).

- Our next meeting will take place in early to May and we will be reading *Bad Blood: Secrets and Lies in a Silicon Valley Startup* by John Carreyrou.

### **RIWBA's Winter Walking Challenge**

From teasers of spring to ice storms, our walking challenge warriors have stuck with the challenge through everything New England has to throw at us. We are in the final stretches and looking forward to seeing who will win and which charity will benefit. A reminder that all members are welcome to join the group walk on Wednesdays, meeting in Providence in the park on the Main Street side of the Superior Court at 12.



**Want to brag on one of your fellow members? Including yourself?** Email Jessica Rider at [jrider@riag.ri.gov](mailto:jrider@riag.ri.gov) so that we can include those accomplishments in a future edition!

## **ARTICLES AND RESOURCES OF INTEREST:**

**Four Black women became classmates, roommates and lifelong sisters. One of them is now a historic nominee for the Supreme Court.** “This sisterhood has been a lifeline.” (*the 19th*)

**As Rooney Rule Faces Scrutiny, How Will Law Firms’ Mansfield Rule Fare?** The Mansfield Rule, the standard intended to increase representation of women and minorities in law firm leadership, was created in the model of the NFL’s Rooney Rule. (*Law.com*)

**Employees Are Sick of Being Asked to Make Moral Compromises.** While the focus is on workplace flexibility and compensation, many quitting employees may be leaving because “their conscience has been wounded and their innate sense of justice violated.” (*Harvard Business Review*)

**The Persistent Gender Gap at the Supreme Court Lectern.** In the last term just 18% of arguments were presented by women. (*New York Times*)

**Have a valuable article or resource for our membership?** Email Leigh Furtado at [lfurtado@daypitney.com](mailto:lfurtado@daypitney.com) to add it to next month’s edition!

## **EMPLOYMENT AND BOARD OPPORTUNITIES:**

### **GIRLS ON THE RUN RI - BOARD OPPORTUNITY**

Girls on the Run is a physical activity-based positive youth development program that is designed to enhance girls’ social, emotional and physical skills to successfully navigate life experiences. Girls on the Run Rhode Island is an independent council which has served over 3,000 girls in Rhode Island and Bristol County, MA. The organization is seeking new board members. Members commit to 3 year terms, monthly meetings and committee work.

- Virtual information sessions on March 7 (6-6:30pm) and March 9 (12-12:30).  
Registration forms: [3/7](#) and [3/9](#).
- Interested candidates should submit a [Board Member interest form](#) by March 11
- New members will begin on-boarding in May and start their 3 year term in July



## **RHODE ISLAND OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL, SPECIAL ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL, CRIMINAL DIVISION**

- Assistant and Special Assistant Attorneys General represent the people of Rhode Island in civil and criminal matters before trial courts, appellate courts, and the supreme courts of Rhode Island and the United States. The Office is unique among attorneys general offices across the country. Out of fifty states, only two other offices share the same broad criminal mission. The Office's attorneys prosecute complex and violent crimes but also functionally serve as one of the nation's largest district attorney's offices, prosecuting all felonies throughout the state.
- Pay Grade 8728 (\$67,240 - \$76,043)
- Responsibilities: The office is seeking an attorney to fill a position within the Criminal Division to handle the investigation and prosecution of misdemeanor and felony cases.
- Qualifications: Juris Doctorate degree from an accredited law school and be an active member in good standing of the Rhode Island bar, be eligible to waive into the RI Bar, or have taken the RI Bar exam this summer. Candidates should have superior writing skills, good judgment, excellent communication and advocacy skills and the capacity to function at a high level in a demanding environment. Additionally, applicants must exhibit the ability to work in a supportive and professional manner with other attorneys, support staff, law enforcement agencies and the public. Candidates must be computer literate and adept at learning new computer programs. The selected applicant will be subject to a background investigation including reference checks.
- The Attorney General's Office is stronger, more credible, and more capable when its attorneys bring diverse backgrounds, cultures, and perspectives to their work. The Office encourages all qualified applicants from all ethnic and racial backgrounds, veterans, LGBTQ individuals, and persons with disabilities to apply.
- Application Process: Applicants should email (1) a cover letter summarizing why you are interested and describing the skills and abilities you possess that will enable you to succeed in this position, (2) resume, (3) list of three references, (4) letter of good standing from each Bar in which you are a member, and (5) a writing sample to: Aida Crosson, Director of Administration, Office of the Attorney General, 150 South Main Street, Providence, RI 02903, [ACrosson@riag.ri.gov](mailto:ACrosson@riag.ri.gov). If applying for position by submitting cover letter and resume via mail or email, no need to apply through online system.

## **Litigation Associate - Complex Insurance Coverage**

Robinson+Cole, an AmLaw 200 firm, seeks an associate with 3 to 5 years of complex litigation experience to join its Insurance + Reinsurance Practice Group in its Hartford, CT, Stamford, CT, or Providence, RI office.

Robinson+Cole has one of the leading insurance coverage and litigation practices in the United States and supports leading international insurers and underwriters across multiple lines of business, including commercial property, CGL, construction defect, environmental, professional liability and financial lines.

We are looking for a candidate with superior academic credentials, excellent writing and analytical skills, and large-firm or equivalent experience to join our team. Admission to the bar in which the attorney is resident is required. Law review experience and/or judicial clerkship experience are preferred but not essential. The ideal candidate will be expected to assume substantial responsibility for all aspects of case management, including drafting briefs on critical motions, managing discovery, taking and defending depositions, arguing motions, and drafting coverage opinions. Experience in insurance policy analysis and litigating coverage disputes is preferred but not essential.

**Click here to apply**, please include a cover letter, resume, law school transcript and two writing samples (preferably briefs not edited by others).

**Are you hiring?** Know someone looking for a top-notch applicant for an open position? Email Sam Vasques at [Samantha.Vasques@lockelord.com](mailto:Samantha.Vasques@lockelord.com) to add an opportunity to our employment section!

## **MONTHLY MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:**

The Monthly Member Spotlight is your cheat sheet to the incredible women who are your fellow RIWBA members. Keep an eye on your inbox, because you might be next!

This month, we are delighted to spotlight **SIOBHAN STEPHENS-CATALA**, Legal Counsel at Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training. Read on to learn more about **SIOBHAN!**

**What was your first paying job?** Science Camp Counselor to 2<sup>nd</sup> graders at P.S. 284 in Brooklyn, NY.

**If we peeked into your fridge, what would we see?**  
Leftovers from Sommer's Corner in Cranston.



**What would you sing at karaoke night?** Anything from Mary J. Blige

**What is one goal you'd still like to accomplish in your lifetime?** I want to raise both my children to be successful and productive citizens.

**Can you share something about yourself that others would be surprised to learn?** Though I have lived in Rhode Island for 20 years, I have been to the beach maybe four times.

**What is the last book you read?** "The Blackbirds" by Eric Jerome Dickey

**In fifty words or fewer, describe what you want other RIWBA members to know about your practice.**

I have been practicing law within the public service sector for 15 years. I was Senior Legal Counsel at Rhode Island Department of Transportation, and I served as a Staff Attorney for Rhode Island Legal Services. I am currently employed as Legal Counsel for the Department of Labor and Training.

### **NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE:**

Have something you would like to see in the next newsletter? Let us know by March 30th to include it in the latest edition. And as always, thanks for reading!

*Leigh Furtado, Jessica Rider, Sam Vasques, Lindsay Lieberman and Meredith Thommen, RIWBA Newsletter Committee*

**RIWBA Newsletter Committee**

