

Women@Weil

Women@Weil Mission Statement

Women@Weil is the affinity group for women attorneys at Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP. Women@Weil embraces the talents and energy of women across Weil Gotshal, focusing on mentoring and networking, recruiting and retention, pro bono initiatives, and business development and outreach. Women@Weil reflects the firm's recognition of the importance of women in every aspect of firm life and supports the advancement of women at the firm. Women@Weil encourages the firm's women to achieve their potential in their professional and personal lives, helping them address the challenges they may encounter along the way.

Women Advancement

Women Leaders: There are 66 women partners globally (20%). Twenty-two percent of the firm's US partners are women. Seven women are leaders of departments, heads of office or practice groups. Furthermore, two of the 16 members of the Management Committee are women.

New Women Partners: Two women were among the seven new partners elected in 2008. In 2006, 50% of new partners promoted were women.

Women Associates and Counsel: Thirty three percent of the firm's associates and counsel are women. Weil Gotshal also appointed two women of six new counsel in 2008.



DC Women@Weil's 3rd annual holiday champagne tasting at Schneiders of Capitol Hill at PS-7s, December 2008. Partners shown are Holly Loiseau, Annemargaret Connolly and Laura Wilkinson.

Women Initiatives

Life/Work Balance: The firm created the role of "Flex-Time Partner," available for women and men who have made a long-term career choice to work on a flexible schedule. Since 2000, four Flex-time partners have been elected.

Working Parents: Weil Gotshal has instituted a number of best-in-class policies to accommodate new parents, including:

- Expanded parental leave, providing up to 18 weeks for eligible female associates who are expectant mothers, up to 10 weeks for fathers upon the birth of a child, and up to 10 weeks for adoption leave; and
- a Mother's Room in the New York office for nursing mothers (attorneys, support staff, and visiting clients) who have returned to work.

Weil Gotshal was named one of the
"2009 Best Places for Working Mothers"
by *Working Mother* magazine.

Event Highlights

- Each year the firm hosts a panel of representatives from Legal Momentum who speak about Supreme Court developments and cases that affect the rights of women and children.
- In conjunction with the Women's Bar Association, the DC office hosted a series of brown bag roundtable discussions for women attorneys, addressing topics that affect the advancement and retention of women.
- The DC Office held its Third Annual Women@Weil holiday champagne tasting, hosted by Schneiders of Capitol Hill at PS-7s.
- The Dallas office held a 2008 summer associate and client development lunch at The Mercury. The event was attended by 33 local female in-house counsel as well as the female summer associates and attorneys from the firm.
- Each year the Dallas office holds their "Makeup, Martinis, and Must Haves" event at Neiman Marcus for the firm's women attorneys and clients. For the last two years, the Women@Weil group in New York has held a similar event at Henri Bendel, with all proceeds going to the Breast Cancer Research Foundation.
- The New York office held a series of roundtable discussions entitled "Success and Balance: Building a Strong Career in the 21st Century," which was open to all female attorneys.
- The New York office hosted a panel entitled "Women in Philanthropy" which explained how female attorneys at the firm can get involved in work through the Pro Bono Department, as well as gain access to board positions at organizations. Guests included the firm's Pro Bono Counsel as well as the General Counsels from Lincoln Center and Baby Buggy Inc.
- In 2009 women summer associates in the New York office got to know Women@Weil during a "Paint Your Own Pottery" outing.
- The London office teamed up with client General Electric, in its "Refuge, Champagne and Canapés" networking and fund raising evening for over 300 business women and 40 companies across London benefiting Refuge and the Hilton Foundation.

Contributions & Sponsorships

In the past year, Weil Gotshal supported the following organizations and activities:

- American Bar Association Commission on Women in the Profession's Margaret Brent Awards
- Catalyst Awards Dinner and member of the organization
- Direct Women's Board Excellence Award Luncheon
- Girls Inc.'s Annual Roundtable Breakfast and hosted Girls Inc. of New York City College Shower
- Girl Scouts of Greater New York Career Exploration Day
- Legal Momentum's Equal Opportunity Awards Dinner and Aiming High Awards Lunch
- National Council for Research on Women's Making A Difference for Women Awards Dinner and member of the organization
- Women's Bar Association of Washington, DC's Initiative on the Retention and Advancement of Women of Color in Law firms and 2009 Annual Dinner
- Women's Business Enterprise Council and Women Presidents' Organization and member of the organizations
- YWCA of New York's Academy of Women Leaders Salute Lunch
- YWCA Women's Employment Program through donation to the program and participation in the program as mentors

Women@Weil also spearheads the firm's involvement in a clothing drive for Dress for Success in New York, while the Silicon Valley group sponsors a drive for Career Closet. Both nonprofit organizations are dedicated to helping women in crisis get back to work. In Dallas, Women@Weil members volunteer with organizations and initiatives such as Big Brothers Big Sisters, Habitat for Humanity, Make a Wish Foundation, Missing and Exploited Children's Fund, Teach for America, and Young Friends of the Ronald McDonald House.

Pro Bono

Weil Gotshal represented a lesbian Iranian woman in her attempt to secure asylum in the US after enduring persecution related to her sexual orientation and her work on behalf of an exiled Persian singer who supported women's rights. The client had suffered torture on multiple occasions and heard her gay and lesbian friends being hanged and stoned to death after she and her friends were arrested at a gay party. The University of Tehran expelled her after an underground paramilitary organization known as the *Basij* alleged that she was a lesbian. Ultimately, the government sentenced her to lashings. She feared she would be killed if she returned as she had an outstanding court hearing in a country where lesbian women can be sentenced to death. The Weil Gotshal asylum unit went into action, knitting together a legal team to advocate for our client's welfare. Our efforts were rewarded when our client received a grant of asylum, allowing her to stay in the United States.

Weil Gotshal secured legal immigration status for a young Ivorian woman whose parents had planned to return her to Cote D'Ivoire to be circumcised and to take part in an arranged marriage. Despite abundant US government documentation characterizing such circumcisions as instances of female genitalia mutilation, as well as documents detailing the practice of arranged marriages in Cote D'Ivoire, counsel for the Department of Homeland Security objected to our client's application for relief.

During the course of preparing her application, the Weil Gotshal team came to learn that our client's parents had regularly beat and emotionally abused her since they brought her to the United States to cook and clean for the family five years ago. In light of this domestic abuse, the team filed a claim for relief under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). After hearing the in-court testimony of the client along with the rest of the documentary evidence including the declarations of several fact and expert witnesses, the court granted the VAWA claim, entitling our client to the benefits of US residency status.

Leadership

Holly Loiseau, a Litigation Partner in the Washington, DC office and a member of Women@Weil was recently named President Elect of the Women's Bar Association of the District of Columbia for the 2009-2010 year. In 2010 she will become President of the Association.

In November of 2008, the Wall Street Journal named Women@Weil member Marcia Goldstein one of the 50 women in the world deemed most influential in business and finance. Marcia, a member of the firm's Management Committee, was singled out for her high-profile representations in the bankruptcy arena among other achievements.



At the 2008 Women@Weil Holiday Party, Management Committee member Akiko Mikumo honors new partners, Elyse Kirschner and Joanne Etherton.

Contacts

Asia

Akiko Mikumo
+852 3476 9008
akiko.mikumo@weil.com

Boston, Providence

Marilyn French
617 772 8319
marilyn.french@weil.com

Dallas

Angela Fontana
214 746 7895
angela.fontana@weil.com

Europe

Britta Grauke
+49 69 21659 650
britta.grauke@weil.com

Houston

Melanie Gray
713 546 5045
melanie.gray@weil.com

London

Sarah Priestley
+ 44 20 7903 1146
sarah.priestley@weil.com

Miami

Nellie Camerik
305 577 3185
nellie.camerik@weil.com

New York

Erika Weinberg
212 310 8910
erika.weinberg@weil.com

Silicon Valley

Karen Ballack
650 802 3120
karen.ballack@weil.com

Washington, DC

Annemargaret Connolly
202 682 7037
annemargaret.connolly@weil.com