

Message from the Chair

I am pleased to report that the Elder Law Section just completed another successful Annual Meeting, CLE and Cocktail Reception at the New York Hilton on January 22, 2013. With a crowd of 400 in attendance, the Section nominated and elected the following slate of Officers for the 2013/2014 term, **Frances M. Pantaleo** as **Chair**, **Richard A. Weinblatt** as **Chair-Elect**, **JulieAnn Calareso** as **Vice-President**, **David Goldfarb** as **Secretary**, and the newly elected **Martin Hersh** as **Treasurer**. Additionally, the following individuals were elected as District Delegates, **Matthew J. Nolfo**, for District 1, **Robert Mascali** for District 7 and **Richard A. Marchese** for District 7. I wish to congratulate all of the elected officers and district delegates. I look forward to working with them in the upcoming year.

I wish to thank Immediate Past Chair **T. David Stapleton** and the members of the Nominating Committee for all of their hard work and efforts. David not only chaired the Nominating Committee but also did double duty with the Awards Committee. This year the Section honored Past Chair **Sharon Kovacs Gruer** by awarding her the "Friend of the Section" Award in recognition of her many years of hard work and efforts on behalf of our Section and its mission. The Awards Committee also honored **Ira Salzman** and **Ronald Fatoullah** for all of their hard work and efforts relevant to the adoption of the Uniform Guardianship Act in New York. Their efforts were truly in furtherance of the rights of the elderly and persons with disabilities. I wish to express my personal Congratulations to **Sharon, Ira** and **Ron** for their contributions to our Section and the mission of elder law attorneys. You are each an asset to our Section.

I would also be remiss if I did not share more good news with you. On January 25, 2013 at the Annual Meeting of the New York State Bar Association and the meeting of the State Bar House of Delegates, Section Past Chair, **Kathryn Grant Madigan** was awarded the prestigious **Ruth G. Schapiro Award** for 2012 presented by the State Bar Committee on Women in the Law. This award was presented to Kate in recognition of her significant contributions to addressing the concerns of women and her efforts in promoting women in the law. For all of you who do not know Kate, she has for decades worked tirelessly on behalf of our Section and on numerous and varied legal causes. She is a role model not only for women attorneys, but for any attorney who wishes to lead by example. It is truly an honor and privilege to have Kate as one of our own.

I also want to thank **Robert J. Kurre** and **Amy O'Connor** for organizing an excellent CLE Program that covered many timely and important topics. Every presenter and panelist was excellent. We owe Bob, Amy and all the presenters a debt of gratitude.

Our Section has just completed a financially successful 2012. Both our Summer and Fall Meetings



were profitable and well attended. As of year end 2012 our Section had a surplus in excess of one hundred and forty thousand dollars (\$140,000.00). This surplus will give us the flexibility to tackle some new initiatives such as the planned Spring Mediation Committee CLE, which will train our members to be certified mediators in Elder Law and Trusts and Estates disputes. If you are interested in attending this CLE please contact **Judy Grimaldi** and **Laurie Menzies**, the Mediation Committee Co-Chairs. Our surplus will also allow us the ability to promote other initiatives such as Diversity, Mentoring, Study Group, Practice Management and our new Elder Abuse initiative.

I am also pleased to inform you that our Executive Committee has just authorized the formation of a special Elder Abuse Committee. This Committee will be chaired by **Joy Solomon** and will focus on educating our members to identify and report suspected cases of elder abuse, whether it be physical or financial. We are all hopeful that this Committee will receive the support of the membership and will eventually become a permanent Committee. I encourage you to contact **Joy Solomon** if you are interested in becoming a Committee member and assisting her with this endeavor.

In February and March, our Legislation Committee, Co-Chaired by **Amy O'Connor** and **Ira Salzman**, prepared our response to Governor Cuomo's proposed 2013/2014 Budget which contained a renewed proposal to eliminate spousal refusal for Medicaid home care. I am most pleased to report that we have again defeated the proposed legislative attempt to eliminate spousal refusal for Medicaid home care. The final budget did not include the Governor's proposal. Please join me in congratulating our Legislation Committee.

Additionally, there are many important legal issues being raised relevant to the implementation of Managed Long Term Care in New York. We traveled to Albany on February 12, 2013 to lobby our state legislators as to all of the issues we are most concerned with as a Section. Additionally, our Legislation Committee will be working to renew the legislative proposal that would permit one to utilize a Special Needs Trust to fund the elective share for his or her disabled spouse.

In conclusion, I respectfully urge you to become an active participant in our Section. I can personally assure you that it will be personally and professionally rewarding. If I can be of any assistance to you or if you have any questions or concerns, I am at your disposal. I can be reached via email at aenea@aol.com or at (914) 948-1500.

Anthony J. Enea