Featured Event – Show Me the Money: Closing the Gender Gap

by Carol C. Villegas, Esq.

Fifty years after the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, a woman still makes an average of 77 cents for every dollar that a man makes. The pay gap exists in every profession -- including law -- and it is worse for women of color. So what can we as lawyers do about it?

NYSBA's Committee on Women in the Law addressed these issues in a program entitled "Show Me the Money: Can We Close the Gender Equity Gap?" on January 28, 2014. The program, which had record attendance, was featured as the Tenth Annual Edith I. Spivack Symposium and NYSBA Women's Community Kickoff at NYSBA's Annual Meeting in New York City.

The program focused on several important topics: (1) the still-existing pay gap between women lawyers and their male counterparts; (2) gender inequity in promotion and leadership ranks at law firms; (3) gender inequity both in and outside of the courtroom; and (4) the impact of unconscious bias against women attorneys.

It kicked off with an eye-opening keynote speech about an annual survey conducted by the National Association of Women Lawyers. The survey looks at the retention of women lawyers, rainmaking, compensation, and leadership roles. Hard numbers from the survey showed that, despite advances made in

recent years, female attorneys still are lagging in pay, rainmaking, and management roles at firms.

The program also featured three panel presentations. The first panel discussed fair pay legislation and how female attorneys can advance in law firms in terms of promotion, compensation, and leadership roles. The second panel used short videos to highlight situations where a female attorney may encounter overt or unconscious bias in a deposition, mediation, or jury selection proceeding. The panelists provided concrete examples of how to deal with these potential biases. The third panel discussed unconscious bias and an evolving body of discrimination law surrounding equity pay issues.

After the panel presentations, attendees continued the conversation in a networking reception sponsored by Baker & Hostetler LLP.

Thank you to all who were involved with this valuable program. $\ensuremath{\mathcal{R}}$

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