



**Linda Klein**

As a young person, Linda Klein was very close to her parents and grandparents. These relationships sparked in her an interest in elder law and in 1980, upon graduating cum laude from Union College in Schenectady, New York, she enrolled in Washington & Lee Law School in Virginia. As a law student, she volunteered to assist underprivileged Appalachians prepare their income tax returns.

After graduating from law school in 1983, instead of accepting the highest offer, she instead chose a lower paying position that would allow her to gain the most trial practice experience. In 1993, Ms. Klein joined Gambrell & Stolz, LLP in Atlanta where she currently serves as Managing Partner. Her practice includes business dispute resolution, including contract law, construction law, fidelity and surety law, employment law and professional responsibility.

In the late 1980s, Ms. Klein became active in the State Bar of Georgia.

She ran for a seat on the Board of Governors in 1990 and prevailed despite strong opposition. Following that victory, she was elected by the 134-member board to serve on its Executive Committee. This fueled her next campaign for Secretary, which was an overwhelming victory and paved the way to her becoming the first female President of the State Bar of Georgia.

As President-elect, she was concerned that the federal cuts in legal services would disproportionately affect women and children, specifically victims of domestic violence. She worked with legal service providers and community organizations to lobby the Georgia legislature for the first-ever appropriation. In addition to collecting money, food, furniture and other necessities, the coalition gained 100% support in both houses for the appropriation. This effort resulted in continuous assistance for 6,000 needy families annually.

As President of the State Bar of Georgia, Ms. Klein served on the traditionally male Judicial Nominating Commission. She encouraged qualified women to apply for judicial appointments, which enabled the Governor to appoint more women to the bench than all other previous governors combined. A tireless supporter of women candidates, Ms. Klein chaired campaign committees, raised money, and gave advice on political strategy.

Linda Klein has inspired not only younger and older lawyers, but other young women and girls. She spoke to school classes and took Daisy Scouts (underprivileged kindergarten students) to a State Bar of Georgia Annual Meeting to expose them to the legal system and encourage their interest in the law. She always finds time to cultivate younger lawyers. According to members at her firm, "she excites them about the practice of law, about their cases, and about giving back to the community. Every candidate for employment wants to meet her. Young women attorneys, even those who know her only by reputation, often speak of how she has inspired them." Several women attorneys attribute their positions to Ms. Klein's zealous advocacy.

At the American Bar Association (ABA), she worked her way up the leadership track in the Tort Trial and Insurance Practice Section, now serving as its Chair. In addition to Ms. Klein's numerous ABA activities and women's advocacy groups such as Leadership America, she is a member and participant in many minority and local bar associations and is a founding member of the Georgia Chapter of the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association. She was an early member of the Board of Directors Network (BDN), a nonprofit organization whose mission is to increase the number of women and minorities on corporate boards and general counsel positions in Georgia.

In 2000, as President of BDN, she brought attention and funding to the organization. When BDN published its annual study of women on boards and corporate leadership positions in Georgia public companies, with Ms. Klein's guidance, the results reached many media outlets, including the Wall Street Journal. Needless to say, all but one of Georgia's 16 Fortune 500 companies now have at least one woman on their boards.

Linda Klein truly epitomizes the Margaret Brent Award. She serves as Chair of the Tort Trial and Insurance Practice Section (TIPS), litigator, law firm managing partner, fundraiser, motivational and Continuing Legal Education (CLE) speaker, and a genuinely giving person. She maintains a strong marriage with an equally talented and supportive husband, Michael Neuren, a native Georgian.