



Dear Sisters,
Dear Daughters

Strategies for Success from
Multicultural Women Attorneys



Introduction

When the Multicultural Women Attorneys Network (MWAN) first broached the topic of publishing another book of essays, the first question we asked was, why should we publish a second volume? What was needed, and how would it differ from *Dear Sisters, Dear Daughters: Words of Wisdom from Multicultural Women Attorneys Who've Been There and Done That*? Obviously, we concluded that this book was needed.

So many of our sisters and daughters are seeking guidance on how to succeed in the legal profession. They are searching for ways to quell fears of whether they belong, whether they can succeed, and how they should address issues of marginalization, sexism, and racism. In addition, they are searching for answers on how to balance work, family, and personal values.

While there are no easy answers, we thought, why not provide them with a useful tool? Our goal for *Dear Sisters, Dear Daughters: Strategies for Success from Multicultural Women Attorneys* is to provide the next generation with a collection of tips for success that they can use as they begin to contemplate and shape their careers in the legal profession.

We solicited women from a variety of cultural backgrounds and practice settings to write to our sisters and daughters about success strategies for their particular practice area. Our authors are mostly litigators and transactional lawyers, many of whom have been the firsts in their field. They have held key leadership positions and received numerous awards recognizing their legal skills and their significant contributions to the legal profession. They are authors, leaders, teachers, and speakers. Five of our authors contributed essays to *Dear Sisters, Dear Daughters: Words of Wisdom from Multicultural Women Attorneys Who've Been There and Done That*.

As you read the book, you meet our sisters from various cultural backgrounds. These women work and live throughout the country, from Hawaii to the East Coast. You also will notice that one of our contributors is a Chaldean American who was born in Baghdad, Iraq and moved to the United States when she was

eight. We thought it was valuable for you to read Nida Samona's strategies for success and see some of the commonality faced by our sisters and daughters. We also have an essay contributed by a transgender multicultural woman, Mia Yamamoto. We included Mia's story because we know that some of our sisters and daughters are dealing with the issue of being a lesbian or transgender attorney. We have tried to capture a broad array of concerns and challenges facing our sisters and daughters and provide them with strategies for succeeding based on all of the issues they may encounter.

The book is organized by practice settings: (a) large and midsize firms; (b) solo and small firm practices; (c) public service, including government, nonprofits, executive roles in government and nonprofits, the judiciary, and elected officials; (d) in-house practices; and (e) academia. Following the essays in each chapter are tips for success from the authors featured in that chapter. Although we know you will enjoy the essays, the tips are designed to be a quick reference that we think you will frequently refer to for inspiration. The essays end with a response from one of our sisters/daughters from the next generation. From her, we see how these letters encourage and give comfort to those who follow.

For the most part, the essayists provide strategies for success for their practice settings. You will note, however, that despite their practice settings, there are consistent themes as most of the authors reflect on the importance of family, friends, religion, values, and giving back. Of course, these are individuals' perspectives on these topics, and certainly you will not agree with all of the advice provided in the essays. We are sure that you will finish this book armed with helpful advice on creating your own successful path in the legal profession. As two of our authors state, "There is no one path to career success." "You must explore what 'success' looks and feels like to you." So, my sisters and daughters, read on and develop your strategies for success. We will be waiting to guide, cheer, and walk with you on your path to success.