

## **Charting Our Future: Hearings on the Status of Women in the Law From Our Colleagues in Seattle**

The Commission on Women in the Profession held hearings in cities around the country in 2003. During the 2003 ABA Midyear Meeting in Seattle, local lawyers shared their experiences.

### **On Balance...**

A partner in a 33-person firm since 1996 and a mother of young children said. "I am happy and have a great balance, but I am a minority that is so small in our profession that it is incredibly sad."

Now head of the firm's employment group and its marketing, she said that when she was made partner, she was working 135-hour month. "When I looked at our monthly time sheet yesterday, almost every partner in my firm has now lowered his hours to my level, and so we have a more humane practice...I know many smaller law firms have managed to figure this out. We had two maternity leaves and five or six paternity leaves last year, and from a management perspective, it was a nightmare...But we managed to work it out." Large law firms, she said, "need to look to us—the small and mid-sized law firms—and figure out how we were able to succeed... We don't lose women anymore, at least in my law firm, to the inability to establish a balance."

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