

Foreword

Her Story 2 is a collection of voices that persist in a profession that still lags behind in hearing them. We share these stories because the profession is enriched by the stories and the lawyers who tell them. This book is a form of virtual mentoring meant to build up the next generation of woman advocates so they, too, may add their stories.

Our first edition of this book included my essay on why it is so important to stop thinking of women as “balancing” “work” and “life.” Channeling the advice of a dear Litigation Section mentor, I encouraged all women lawyers to start thinking about our role as “managers,” who allocate resources among various tasks and responsibilities. The image of perilously balancing on a tightrope has proven stubborn, however. With that as our model, we continue to have women so exhausted by teetering on that imaginary high-wire that our progress in the profession is still not where we want it to be. Yet when you look at what those women are accomplishing each day, the women lawyers I know are some of the most exceptional managers around. Sharing our stories of how we manage our responsibilities and how many different forms that management takes is an important piece to advancing women in the profession. The more we share our stories, the more we let go of an idealized image of a tightrope walker.

Sharing stories is what made the American Bar Association (ABA) Litigation Section Woman Advocate Committee such a welcoming home. Immediately upon walking alone into my very first dinner with the Woman Advocate Committee, I was greeted by someone wanting to know my story—who I was, where I was from, what my practice was

like, how I defined my family. As that evening and many subsequent ones passed, I learned the stories of those around me. I credit a lot of my longevity in the profession to the women who took me under their wings and were about 15 years older than I was. They told stories of their love of trying cases to juries, stories of how they fit business development into their busy days, stories of how to advocate for compensation, and stories of how to manage a thriving practice with a thriving family. All of these women approached management of their lives in different ways, but each demonstrated that I could do so as well. I was not the only one who these woman advocates mentored, however. I had colleagues in the Litigation Section of my own age as well. We've served as each other's personal boards of directors, coached each other through career twists and turns, and been there for each other during life crises. Their stories, too, inspired and energized me. Upon my return from Litigation Section meetings, my family and colleagues would sense the energy generated from having shared stories and experiences with a diverse set of voices from across the country.

I encourage all of you to read the stories in this book and think about how they inform your management decisions. But don't let the investment in yourself stop there. Come join the Litigation Section at a meeting, get involved with the Woman Advocate Committee, and benefit from the community it will provide you. Feed off of that energy so that you can manage all that life throws at you. I promise you that you will be welcomed and your stories will be heard.

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