VETERANS LEGAL SERVICES INITIATIVE

Date: Wednesday, November 16, 2016
Location: Chicago - North/Center Boardroom 21st Floor
         DC - 5th FL. John Marshall Room B, #570
Time:  2:00 PM CT (Chicago)/3:00 PM EST (DC)

If you are a veteran, know a veteran, have a family member or friend who is a veteran, then please join us for ABA President Linda Klein’s Veterans Legal Services Initiative presentation to learn more about the ABA’s plans to help veterans. President Linda Klein will be participating via video conference from our DC office.

What is the ABA doing now? Learn more about the ABA’s current veterans legal services mission and ABA’s Military Pro Bono Project.

Linda Klein
ABA President

Jason Vail
Legal Services

Mary Meixner
Legal Services

Sponsored by the
Chicago Staff Diversity Council
ABA President Linda Klein, via video conference, will provide an overview of the ABA Veterans Legal Services Initiative.

Jason Vail, Senior Attorney/Chief Counsel 2, Legal Services
Mary Meixner, Director of Military Pro Bono Project, Legal Services
Together will describe ongoing ABA programs for veterans and enlisted military.
LINDA A. KLEIN
PRESIDENT,
AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION
2016 – 2017

Linda Klein is the senior managing shareholder at Baker Donelson Bearman Caldwell & Berkowitz and president of the American Bar Association.

Klein’s practice, based in Atlanta, includes most types of business dispute resolution, including contract law, employment law and professional liability, working extensively with clients in the construction, higher education and pharmaceutical industries.

In June 1997, Klein became the first woman to serve as president of the State Bar of Georgia. During Klein’s term, she devised a proposal and advocated for the state to allocate funding for Georgia Legal Services and Atlanta Legal Aid to hire lawyers to help indigent victims of domestic violence. She organized a statewide group of community organizations and local and minority bar associations that together convinced the General Assembly to appropriate $2 million. Since then, the annual appropriations have helped thousands in Georgia with legal issues related to domestic violence.

Klein was one of the first women to lead a prominent Georgia law firm. She served as managing partner of Gambrell & Stolz beginning in 2001 and led the firm's 2007 merger with Baker Donelson, becoming a Baker Donelson board member and Georgia managing shareholder.

She served as chair of the ABA’s House of Delegates, the second highest office in the organization, from 2010–2012. She has also served as chair of the Tort Trial and Insurance Practice Section, chair of the Committee on Rules and Calendar of the House of Delegates, chair of the Coalition for Justice, and chair of ABA Day, the Association’s Congressional outreach effort. She is a member of the Council of the ABA Section of International Law and also serves as a columnist and on the Board of Editors of Law Practice Management Magazine. In 2004, the American Bar Association honored Klein with the prestigious Margaret Brent Women Lawyers of Achievement Award.

She was an early member of the Board of Directors Network, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to increase diversity on corporate boards and general counsel positions. Her other community activities include leadership in Southface Energy Institute and the Buckhead Coalition. In June, Klein received the Distinguished Service Award, the highest honor bestowed by the State Bar of Georgia. In 2009, Klein was honored with the Randolph Thrower Award for Lifetime Achievement from the State Bar of Georgia and was named to the YWCA Academy of Women Achievers.

Klein is listed in “The Best Lawyers in America”, “Who's Who in America” and “Chambers USA.” She is regularly named to the “Super Lawyers” top 100 lawyers in Georgia, an honor bestowed upon only nine women in 2014. She is also regularly named one of the top 50 female lawyers in Georgia by “Super Lawyers.” In 1998, “Georgia Trend Magazine” named her one of the 100 most powerful and influential Georgians.

Klein earned her J.D. at Washington & Lee Law School in Virginia and her B.A. at Union College in New York.
Jason T. Vail is a Senior Attorney in the American Bar Association Division for Legal Services and serves as Chief Counsel to the Standing Committee on Legal Assistance for Military Personnel, supporting the Committee’s efforts to enhance the scope and availability of civil legal services for military personnel and their families. Significant initiatives Jason has undertaken include creation of ABA Home Front, an online legal resource for military families; the ABA Military Pro Bono Project, a first-of-its-kind national pro bono program for active-duty military; and the ABA Veterans’ Claims Assistance Network, a pro bono project assisting veterans with disability compensation claims. Jason received his J.D. cum laude from Gonzaga University School of Law and serves as a member of the Illinois State Bar Association Military Affairs Committee and as chair of the Illinois Joining Forces Legal Support Working Group.
Mary Meixner joined the American Bar Association as the Director of the ABA Military Pro Bono Project in 2011. Through the Project, Mary connects junior-enlisted, active-duty military personnel and their families in need of pro bono legal assistance with volunteer attorneys throughout the United States. She works with military attorneys who refer cases to the Project on behalf of their service member clients, and she collaborates with state and local bar associations, legal organizations, and law firms to recruit volunteer attorneys who have a special interest in helping our military families. Mary also was involved with the establishment of an ABA pilot program in 2014-15—the ABA Veterans’ Claims Assistance Network—through which lawyers could help veterans complete their disability benefits claims with the Department of Veterans Affairs.