



Teveia Barnes

Teveia Barnes has known from early childhood that she wanted to become an attorney. A self-described skinny kid from San Antonio, Texas, she was the one who all of the other children would approach to settle disputes. As a youngster, she was considered extremely studious. Nonetheless, she came into her own in college, earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1975 from Rice University, as a triple major in economics, German studies, and political science. Upon graduating from Rice, Ms. Barnes attended and graduated from New York University Law School in 1978. She practiced law in New York at Simpson, Thacher & Bartlett from 1978 to 1983, and from 1983 to 1986, she practiced at Sage, Gray, Todd and Sims. From 1986 to 1999, she served as Associate General Counsel and Senior Vice President at Bank of America, where she supervised over 50 attorneys and provided counsel in commercial real estate, commercial lending, investment management, mutual funds and other departments. Ms. Barnes demonstrated her ability to influence women when she launched the Bank of America's, Diversity Initiative for women and minorities. She remained unassuming and humble in her leadership.

In 1999, Ms. Barnes accepted a public service calling to pursue public interest law at the request of former President Bill Clinton. Clinton appointed Ms. Barnes as Executive Director and General Counsel for Lawyers for One America (LFOA). LFOA is a national non-profit organization commissioned to work with a collaboration of lawyers and organizations to promote diversity and pro bono services for women and minorities in the legal profession. Under Ms. Barnes' leadership, LFOA produced Bar None: Report to the President of the United States on the Status of People of Color and Pro Bono Services in the Legal Profession, and the video, "Bending the Arc Toward Justice."

Ms. Barnes' service to LFOA ended in 2001, yet she again yielded to the call of public service, to serve as the Executive Director and General Counsel to the Bar Association of San Francisco ("BASF"). There, she managed over 85 staff persons to develop and facilitate programs to advance the mission of the 9,600 voluntary member bar organization. In addition, she also maintained oversight of the Association's Volunteer Legal Services program, the largest comprehensive Pro Bono service provider in San Francisco, the Lawyer Referral Service, the Alternative Dispute Resolution Program, the Continuing Legal Education Department, the Barristers Club, the Association's Foundation, and all Association publications.

In 2003, Ms. Barnes returned as President of LFOA where she also chaired the Strategic Planning Committee for the National Institute for Diversity in the Law in collaboration with the LFOA, American Bar Association, and several other national minority bar associations. Ms. Barnes' goals for the National Institute are to prepare middle school students of color through law school for successful participation in the legal profession and to play a major role in developing a justice system and legal community reflective of the larger diverse community.

Ms. Barnes volunteers at a great many organizations. She served as a board member at Equal Rights Advocates for two years before resigning to accept her position at the BASF. Equal Rights Advocates is one of the most well established women's legal advocacy groups, based in San Francisco, whose mission is to protect and secure equal rights and economic opportunities for women and girls through litigation and advocacy. An indefatigable ERA Board Member, she was asked and agreed to serve the ERA Board at the conclusion of her BASF term. Ms. Barnes has shown without self-interest, her dedication to the legal profession and continues to assure the equal treatment of women in the work place.

She is on the Board of Trustees for Rice University. She currently serves on the On Lok, Inc. Board, which provides a variety of services to San Francisco's frail elderly community members, the ABA Commission on Women, the California Minority Counsel Program, the American Conservatory Theatre (ACT) Board, as well as the Board of the Branson School. Ms. Barnes has spoken widely at bar gatherings and universities, promoting diversity and taking time to mentor young women and minority lawyers. Teveia Barnes is devoted to her husband, Alan Sankin, and their two children: Aaron, who attends Rice University, and Zachary, who attends the Branson School.