

# NALP BOARD STANDARD LIAISON REPORT

January 30, 2023

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Organization: American Bar Association

Section: Commission on Women in the Profession (CWP)

Chair or Key Person: Honorable Maureen Mulligan, Chair

Chair or Key Person Email: [maureen.mulligan121@gmail.com](mailto:maureen.mulligan121@gmail.com)

## **Report any meetings, webinars, calls or conferences with organizations you have attended in the last 3 months:**

I am attending the in-person business meeting at the ABA Mid-year Meeting on February 3, 2023.

## **Report any notable information or project of interest to NALP/NALP members within the last 3 months:**

The Gritty Teams project with Dr. Milana Hogan is nearing completion and a toolkit and webinar are planned.

## **Attach or include any notable communication of interest to NALP:**

The Commission provides a periodic report for Liaisons to share with their organizations. The January 2023 issue is attached.

## **Report any upcoming project or event of interest to NALP:**

The Gritty Teams project with Dr. Milana Hogan is nearing completion and a webinar is planned for March 3, 2023.

Experiences of Native America Women Attorneys research results are expected in the spring of 2023.

The results of the Parenthood & Child Caregiver Research should be available in the summer of 2023.

## **Report any goal(s) you hope to accomplish by end of your term:**

I have joined a work group on the Guided Conversations project (based on [This Talk Isn't Cheap Report](#)) to brainstorm how to encourage use of the Toolkit in new ways. See attached letter encouraging NALP and NALP members participation in Guided Conversations in 2023.

## **Report any goals suggested for the next year:**

I suggest NALP consider the potential value of appointing a liaison to the ABA's Young Lawyers Division.

**Identify any other NALP members(s) who also play a role of note with this entity:**

Milana Hogan continues to be involved with CWP on Grit-related projects and is working on a project around developing and leading gritty teams, Grit 2.0.

**Identify what significant benefits there are for NALP to continue this liaison relationship:**

The CWP is focused on maintaining the focus on diversity efforts amid the pandemic and continues to research issues related to women's professional development in the legal profession and provide tools and resources to effectuate change.

NALP members will benefit from a front row seat at the Commission and the ABA now with the focus and work around gender issues in the profession.

To the NALP Board:

I am pleased to recommend to you one of the ABA's Commission on Women in the Profession tools for retaining women in the profession, helping them work together to advance racial equity and understanding in the profession: [The This Talk Isn't Cheap research report and Guided Conversations toolkit](#).

The *This Talk Isn't Cheap: Women of Color and White Women Attorneys Find Common Ground* report explores the reasons why women of color have feelings of mistrust toward their white female colleagues, while also addressing the challenges white women experience in attempting to understand the needs of their minority female colleagues.

We're also excited to invite you to utilize the [Guided Conversation's toolkit](#), which engages the research and provides a guide to improving conversations about gender, race, and ethnicity, so that all women can work together in combating the barriers to advancement in the legal profession.

We encourage you to share these materials broadly and consider hosting a conversation for NALP members and encourage members to consider hosting a conversation in their workplaces. The Commission is here to provide resources and recommendations to you, as needed. Please do not hesitate to reach out to Commission Program Specialist, Ashleigh Hill at [ashleigh.hill@americanbar.org](mailto:ashleigh.hill@americanbar.org) with any questions.

Best,

Morgan

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## **Margaret Brent Awards**

### **2023 Nominations Will Close on January 18th**

The Commission continues to facilitate and manage its awards program for the Margaret Brent Women Lawyers of Achievement. Nominations opened on October 28th and will close on January 18th at 5 p.m. CT. The award was established in 1991 to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of women lawyers. Each year, this award honors up to five outstanding women lawyers who have achieved professional excellence within their area of specialty and have actively paved the way to success for other women lawyers. These women demonstrate excellence in a variety of professional settings and personify excellence on either the national, regional, or local level. Honorees for the 2023 ceremony will be chosen at the 2023 ABA Midyear Meeting and announced in early March. The Margaret Brent Awards Ceremony will take as part of the 2023 ABA Annual Meeting.

More information about the Margaret Brent Women Lawyers of Achievement Awards can be found at: [ambar.org/brentawards](https://ambar.org/brentawards).

## **Grit Project**

### **New Research on Teams to Be Released in March 2023**

One of the most popular Commission initiatives, the Grit Project, educates women lawyers about the science behind grit and growth mindset - two important traits that many successful women lawyers have in common. In 2021, the Commission on Women in the Profession launched a new survey designed to measure the effectiveness of gritty, growth mindset-oriented teams and to explore further how leaders, emerging leaders, and team members can encourage, nurture and develop these traits in the team context. Focus groups and one-on-one interviews were held in January 2022, further to develop an understanding of the impact gritty traits have on legal team dynamics. Results from this survey may be used to provide the legal profession with a deeper understanding of factors that contribute to team success and may also help organizations continue to close the gender gap at the leadership level by providing women lawyers with additional strategies and tools that will help them thrive as both team members and team leaders. The research report is expected to be released in March 2023, with a webinar introducing the material on March 3rd. The Grit Project toolkit can be found at [ambar.org/grit](https://ambar.org/grit) and will be updated with the new report once available.

## **Parenthood & Child Caregiver Research**

### **Focus Groups Underway, Research Available Summer 2023**

The Commission moved forward on a study assessing the prevalence and impact of the motherhood penalty and other caregiver biases on the advancement and retention of women lawyers. Through this study, the Commission seeks to achieve three key outcomes, all focused on reducing the impact of the motherhood penalty, and caregiver bias on the advancement and retention of women lawyers: (i) gather and analyze current data about biases faced by mothers and caregivers practicing law across various types and sizes of legal practice, with critical consideration of how these biases are further impacted by race, ethnicity, and other intersectional factors; (ii) prepare and provide evidence-based policy and practice recommendations to law firms and other legal employers; and (iii) develop educational materials/toolkits for use by state and local bar associations and legal employers using the information gleaned from the proposed research.

The Commission on Women in the Profession held multiple meetings of the Parenthood and Child Caregiver Study's Advisory Council to discuss the draft questionnaire for the study and focus group formation. The survey opened to participants the first week of September 2022 and closed on October 17th with over 7,000 male and female respondents. Focus groups are currently underway.

An invite-only Research Summit for the Parenthood and Child Caregiver Study took place on November 11, 2022 at Northwestern University in Chicago. The Summit brought together the Advisory Council, Co-Chairs, and other stakeholders to discuss the research outcomes and potential action steps based on the initial findings from the study.

The Commission on Women in the Profession contracted with the Red Bee Group to undertake its Child Caregiver Study. A final report is anticipated to be available in Summer 2023.

### **Experiences of Native American Women Attorneys**

Research Expected to be Released in Spring 2023

The American Bar Association's Commission on Women in the Profession (CWP) and the National Native American Bar Association (NNABA) are collaborating to explore the unique experiences of Native American women who navigate the intersection of tribal identity, race and gender in the legal profession. This research study elevating women Native American attorneys has been designed as a qualitative study consisting of confidential individual interviews to explore their unique experiences and perspectives. Nextions was chosen as the contracted researcher for this project.

With the help of a Firekeepers Circle (Advisory Board) consisting of representatives from both NNABA and the American Bar Association, the registration process for this research launched in the summer 2022. These efforts were fruitful; 154 individuals registered, exceeding the study's initial goal. To accommodate as many of those interested in participating as possible, a random selection process was conducted by the researchers to determine who to invite to the conversational interviews. Twenty-five individuals were chosen from those with 0-5 years of law practice experience and twenty-five from those with 16-20+ years of law practice experience. Those not selected for individual interviews were invited to one of two larger listening sessions/focus groups. Invitations for the interviews and the two larger conversational listening sessions initially went out in October. As of January 2023, interviews are continuing to take place. A report is expected to be released in Spring 2023.

### **Perspectives**

The Commission continues to plan and publish its online publication *Perspectives* four times a year. The December issue of *Perspectives* was sent to about 54K ABA members on December 14. The issue's lead article revisits the promise of Title IX, which was enacted 50 years ago, and concludes that gender equality has not been

achieved. Ting Ting Cheng authored the issue's Voices column and stressed that the need for constitutional protection for gender equality is stronger than ever, following the recent Dobbs decision. The CWP News items in the issue announce that nominations for the 2023 Margaret Brent Awards are open, provide an update on the Parenthood & Child Caregiver Study research and the

Gritty Teams research report and highlight the kickoff of the Navigating Your Career Webinar Series. Finally, the issue pays tribute to Hannah Hayes, a decades-long writer for *Perspectives*, after her sudden passing this past summer. The December issue can be found at: [ambar.org/women/publications/perspectives/](https://ambar.org/women/publications/perspectives/).

The next issue is scheduled to release in February 2023. It will be devoted to exploring the legal landscape post-Dobbs with two feature articles and various viewpoints captured in Voices columns.

### **Guided Conversations Project**

Learn how to improve conversations about gender, race, and ethnicity, so that all women can work together in combating the barriers to advancement in the legal profession through the Commission's Guided Conversations toolkit. This toolkit will allow structured conversations about race, ethnicity, gender, & intersectionality. Recommendations within the toolkit are based on the research report. This Talk Isn't Cheap: Women of Color and White Women Attorneys Find Common Ground. More information can be found at:

[ambar.org/women/initiatives\\_awards/women\\_of\\_color\\_research\\_initiative/guided-conversations-project/](https://ambar.org/women/initiatives_awards/women_of_color_research_initiative/guided-conversations-project/).

### **CWP Webinar: Navigating Your Career Webinar Series Kicks Off with "Discovering the True Meaning of Your Success"**

On September 28, the Commission on Women in the Profession launched the Navigating Your Career Webinar Series with the webinar "Discovering the True Meaning of Your Success." Panelists discussed defining success for yourself within the legal profession and beyond as well as the myriad paths to achieve success. The panel offered a nuanced discussion about evolving your career, family and community involvement, and volunteerism, and offer concrete tips on gaining strength to forge your own path. Jin Hwang, Former Director and Associate General Counsel, Verizon served as the moderator. Panelists included Bhavna Fatnani, Compliance Professional/Legal Writer; Tatia Gordon-Troy, CEO, Ramses House Publishing; Krista Lynn Russell, Deputy General Counsel, Airbus-OneWeb Satellites; and Jamie Szal, Tax Partner, Brann & Isaacson.

This non-CLE webinar can be found on the Commission's online multimedia library at: [ambar.org/women/resources/multimedia-library/](https://ambar.org/women/resources/multimedia-library/).