

Policy for the relationship between GAWL and the GAWL Foundation

In GAWL's 75th year, the organization celebrated an anniversary and several important structural changes. In the previous year, GAWL conducted a survey of its members to determine why members joined GAWL and what made members stay involved with GAWL. The results showed that the majority of members joined GAWL for networking and business generating purposes. Based on the result of that survey, GAWL undertook to create a strategic plan. After refining the plan, GAWL developed the following mission-statement: *The mission of the organization is to provide a forum to enhance the welfare and development of women lawyers and support their interests.* Additionally, based on the strategic plan, we set goals in six important areas: (1) work/life balance and quality of life (2) programs (3) networking and rainmaking (4) leadership (5) visibility and (6) membership. Additionally, GAWL restructured its board to better meet its strategic goals.

In furtherance of the strategic plan, GAWL decided to create a Foundation wherein it could transfer its community service activities and former "scholarship fund." As such, the GAWL Foundation was created. The GAWL Foundation was organized to generally carry on, conduct, promote, operate, and undertake any transaction or operation exclusively for charitable or educational purposes. By creating the separate non-profit organization, GAWL's goal was to expand the role of the former scholarship fund. In addition to awarding scholarships to deserving women law students, it now spearheads all community service projects on behalf of GAWL by focusing on those in need in the community and working with other charitable organizations to sponsor events, donate funds, and encourage GAWL members to volunteer their time.

GAWL serves as the umbrella organization, while the GAWL Foundation is an arm of GAWL, structured so that the Foundation could facilitate the charitable and educational activities of GAWL. All members of GAWL can be active in the Foundation, and the Foundation's Board must be members of GAWL. GAWL must approve the Foundation's board members and any change in the Foundation's bylaws.

GAWL shall allocate a portion of the overall GAWL budget to the Foundation. So long as the Foundation is operating within its mission statement and within its budget, the Foundation is free to operate as its Board sees fit. However, the Foundation and GAWL are encouraged to share resources to the extent that it is convenient and feasible for both. For example, it makes sense for GAWL and the Foundation to share websites, an executive director, and events with common purposes.

It is also important for GAWL and the Foundation to avoid misleading or polarizing communications with the public and their members. Both boards should make an effort to communicate in a way that supports the mission statements of both GAWL and the Foundation.

The goal is for both organizations to work together to support women lawyers and their interests. In furtherance of this goal, it is important that both organizations work together rather than compete for funds, member involvement, and other common interests. While GAWL should not micromanage the Foundation or its activities, it is important to communicate and work together so that the efforts of the two organizations are not in conflict.