

**NOMINATION FORM FOR
2016 OUTSTANDING MEMBERS PROGRAM AWARD**

Name of women's bar association being nominated: California Women Lawyers

Name of project, program or service being nominated: Elect to Run

"A program to educate and encourage women to run for public office. Meet other women who have run for office, as well as those who support or train women to run for office, and get all the information you need to decide whether you want to run."

Name of contact person for purposes of award notification: Renee Galente

Association's address: 700 R Street, Suite 200, Sacramento, California 95811

Phone number of contact person: 760-224-5226

Email of contact person: Renee@GalenteLaw.com

Number of members in the bar association: ~1,000

Award the bar association is being nominated for: Outstanding Member Program Award

1. About the bar association being nominated:

California Women Lawyers was founded in 1974 as a grassroots organization with the purpose of advancing women in the legal profession and advocating for the concerns of women in society. Its founding mothers include Justice Rose E. Bird, Justice Joan Dempsey Klein, Hon. Lynn Schenk, and Fay Stender.

Our members come from all walks of life. They are politically, ethnically, and geographically diverse, with differing lifestyles, backgrounds and areas of practice. Yet, all of our members have faced, or will face, some sort of bias (implicit or explicit) due to their gender which will affect their careers.

As a result, for the past 40 years, CWL has worked to encourage all women to join (and thus change the face of) the profession of the law and to increase opportunities for women in the law, while simultaneously supporting issues relevant and important to all women in California, and even the Nation.

CWL is committed to being an active voice of change. Each year, CWL approves Legislative Priorities of bills that the organization will support which will effect positive change to all of its

members. CWL also actively looks for opportunities to join or draft amicus briefs in cases that further its mission.

Through its advocacy, and rigorous screening process, CWL has earned the honor of working closely with the Governor's office on Judicial Appointments. The past decade has seen a marked increase in the diversity of appointed judges. CWL takes what it has learned from that process to put on its "So You Want to be a Judge?" program, which is a previous winner of the NCWBA Outstanding Member Program in 2009, to continue to generate interest in women applying for appointment to the Bench, and to help provide a deeper understanding of how to do so effectively.

Each year, CWL pushes the conversation forward by provided a full day of MCLE on cutting-edge mission-centric topics (i.e. Transgender Issues: Discrimination on Gender Identity and Expression, Lawyers Have Rights, Too: Pregnancy, Lactation, and Related Accommodation Issues, and Sexual Harassment and Implicit Bias Toward Female Attorneys) at the Annual Conference, which is held in various locations throughout the state. CWL also plans 2 Judicial Receptions each year, one in Northern and one in Southern California. The Northern California Reception honors a local judge for excellence as a jurist and longstanding and/or groundbreaking public service in Justice Rose Bird's name. The Southern California Reception honors a local judge in Justice Joan Dempsey Klein's name.

The culmination of the year is CWL's Annual Dinner, held on the first night of the State Bar Annual Meeting. This Dinner hosts 600+ people, including many members of the California Supreme Court, the legislature and other dignitaries.

In 2014, CWL added its first new Signature Event in years- "Elect to Run."

2. About the project, program or service being nominated:

Historical Background: Elect to Run 2014

CWL knew that women are underrepresented in law making. So CWL did research on a National and State-wide level to look closely at just how under-represented women are. Going into the research knowing the numbers would be bad still didn't prepare CWL for the horrifying statistics:

In California in 2014, women made up 28% of the State Legislature, 25% of all county board supervisors and 28% of all city council seats. These numbers drop dramatically for women of color, with 14% of all female city officials identifying as Latina, 3% as Asian/Pacific Islander and African American.¹

¹ The Leadership California Institute, Women 2014: An Examination of the Status of Women in California State and Local Government.

Nationally, in 2014, women in Congress make up only 18.5% of the seats, with 79 women serving in the House of Representatives and 20 women serving in the Senate. To date, only 2 women of color have ever served in the US Senate.²

This research prompted the creation of a Signature Program that could help work to change those statistics.

The inaugural program in 2014 was put together with limited costs, all covered through sponsorship, as it was not contemplated when budgeting during the year-end the year prior. The event was held at Feminist Majority Foundation in Los Angeles so that it would be accessible to many in Southern California and would work in conjunction with an organization with similar goals. Our affiliates in Southern California helped spread the word about the event to interested organizations and CWL created a statistics video which was spread on social media. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=usuHoYIF6Rs>) The structure of the program included a Keynote from California Speaker of the Assembly Toni Atkins, followed by three one hour-long panels on Women Supporting Women, a presentation from Candidates and Elected Officials, and a panel on Candidate Training and Support, followed by Q&A and a reception. Panelists included Sheila Kuehl, Los Angeles County Supervisor, Tori Osborn, Candidate for California Assembly, Sarah Boot, Candidate for San Diego City Council, Sandra Fluke, Candidate for California Senate, Emerge CA, League of Women Voters and Run Women Run. The event was offered at no charge to attendees to encourage everyone to participate, and approximately 50 people attended.

2015 saw the program taken to the next level.

Elect to Run 2015

Elect to Run was held in Oakland (Northern California) on September 1, 2015 to ensure the program was accessible to all members. Wendel Rosen Black & Dean LLP graciously provided a huge space for the event. The room was filled with comfortable chairs for attendees facing elevated chairs and tables for the panels, which fostered a conversational tone. An approximate 100 people attended.

This year, a minimal charge was implemented. Serious debate was given to charging and how much to charge. The goal was to keep the program accessible to everyone while also ensuring that if people registered, they would attend and that a minimal charge would help encourage that. CWL charged \$15 for CWL members and \$20 for non-members.

The entire program was “live tweeted” for those who could not attend and to spread awareness. (@CWL_tweets).

² Center for American Women and Politics, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University.

The Program began with the Elected Officials panel, which featured Rosie Torres, OUSD School Board Member, Linda Seifert, Solano County Supervisor and Thea Selby, Trustee, City College of San Francisco. The panel was moderated by 2014 attendee and Emerge graduate Danielle DeSmeth.

After the panel, first women Mayor of Oakland Libby Schaaf gave a Keynote speech noting, “If you’re brave an don’t mind putting yourself out there a little bit, we [women] can do this [run for office]!”

The second panel on Women Helping Women featured Mary Hughes, Co-Founder and President of Close the Gap, Delaine Eastin, former State Assembly Member, former State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Amber Maltbie, campaign finance and election law attorney. The panel was moderated by Past CWL president and current District Attorney Nancy O’Malley.

The final panel for the day featured Supporting Organizations for women running for office and included Kimberly Ellis, Executive Director of Emerge CA, Betsy Cotton, Director, Close the Gap, France Hsieh, President, San Francisco Women’s Political Committee, and Amy Shrago, Treasurer, East Bay Women’s Political Caucus. The panel was moderated by Katie Merrill, Founder and President of Merrill Strategy Group.

The program closed with a Keynote by State Controller Betty Yee and was followed by a reception in the same location. During the reception, attendees could sign up for Emerge or Close the Gap programs. Again, we are aware of several attendees who have signed up and are currently participating in the Emerge CA 2016 class, which just training kicked off in December. Hon. Betty Yee and many other panelists stayed to meet and greet with attendees, take pictures and answer questions.

Partners in Raising Awareness

This year, CWL spent a serious amount of time reaching out to local like-minded groups and partnered with them. The groups would receive the member discount in return for supporting and advertising the event. CWL partnered with Alameda County Bar Assn., Women Lawyers of Alameda County, Queen’s Bench, Studio D2, Women Lawyers Section of the San Mateo County Bar Assn., Marin County Women Lawyers, East Bay Women’s Political Caucus, Women Lawyers of Sacramento, Black Women Lawyers of Northern California, Women of Color Collective at Berkeley Law, Contra Costa County Women’s Bar Assn., Lawyers Club of San Diego, Santa Barbara Women Lawyers, Equal Rights Advocates, Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles, East Bay La Raza’s Lawyers Association, Close the Gap, UC Hastings Ms. JD, The CLUB, Boalt Women of Color Collective, Santa Clara County Bar Association Women Lawyers Section, Women Lawyers of Santa Cruz County and Emerge California

Feedback

The feedback from the event was overwhelming. Attendees' consistent feedback was "thank you so much for the opportunity to hear from these incredible women" and that the program was "inspirational."

Looking Towards Elect to Run 2016

Elect to Run will be back in Southern California this year and is being chaired by Danielle DeSmeth, who went from attendee (2014) to moderator (2015) to event chair (2016). Danielle is one of the first attendees who were inspired to apply to and graduate from Emerge after the 2014 program. CWL is proud of the process that has brought Danielle to chair this event, which exemplifies the impact that this program has had on attendees.

3. What makes the project, program or service special:

Candid candidates.

While candidate training programs exist, there are none (that we know of³) that answer the "early questions" that many women have when contemplating running for office. Before women can get to the point where they want to apply for training, which can be time consuming and costly, they need to overcome initial hurdles. "Am I good enough?" "How do I fund raise?" "Can I run if I have children?" "What should I run for?" "Can I do it?" 2015 Panelist Linda Seifert acknowledged this saying, "The challenge for women running is making the decision, the commitment, to run." These are the questions that Elect to Run answers through an intimate, personal setting, where candidates take off their public persona hats and talk woman-to-woman.

One 2014 panelist shared that, when she needs to feel powerful, she wears her Wonder Woman underwear. Another 2014 panelist shared that she wouldn't have made it through the process without having her best friend on speed dial to (literally) cry to. Without an open, encouraging and honest dialogue like Elect to Run offers, many women will wonder but won't run.

As Mayor Schaff so eloquently said, "Why don't women run for office? Women often underestimate their qualifications." She also shared, "Don't be afraid to ask for help. You don't have to do this alone."

³ Before Elect to Run there were no programs that we know of that were holding these types of programs. After our 2014 program, a group in Los Angeles reached out to us to ask if they could use the program as a model for a similar program which they ran last year for the first time. We were happy and please to see the program spread.

When asked about how running, and holding office, could interfere with child-raising, Mayor Schaff responded, “Having children doesn’t need to stop you for running from office. Mine were 2 and 4 when I ran...” and followed up with, “Good parenting is not always being home for dinner. It’s also setting an example.”

2015 panelist Thea Selby spoke on losing an election, which, in itself, is a terrifying prospect. She said, “I ran. And then I lost. I had a very strong feeling that if I lost a race, I would not stop. It was important to me as a woman to run again.” And when ran again, she won.

Having the ability to hear personal details from candidates, wins, losses, freak-outs, fun times; all these things are unique to Elect to Run.

The connections forged are clear, strong and meaningful. How much does it mean to the attendees when a woman who is the Mayor of a City looks at them and says, “Studies show women need to be asked to run. So, I’m asking everyone here- run!”

Women need to support each other.

Elect to Run’s panel on Women Supporting Women is novel and absolutely necessary. Kimberly Ellis of Emerge CA drove this point home when she said, “It is interesting, and frustrating, that men support more women candidates than women do... We need to write more checks and bigger checks for women candidates.”

Women need to re-focus the spotlight.

Women tend to get wrapped up in the whether or not they “have what it takes” to run. But, in truth, the spotlight should not be on the candidate, but those for whom the candidates stands for or the cause for which the candidate is passionate. Formal training programs exist to groom candidates. Elect to Run serves a different purpose. When asked “How do you know which office to even run for?” 2015 panelist Mary Hughes responded, “Figure out what you’re passionate about and have a clear sense of what you want to do for others.” Along the same lines, Betty Yee said, “Be unafraid. What is the worst that can happen to you for standing up and acting on behalf of what is right?”

Elect to Run gets the initial questions answered, fears overcome and focus centered for potential women candidates.

Pictures from 2014 available here:

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.736991289706740.1073741831.137064503032758&type=3>

Pictures from 2015 available here:

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.902380749834459&type=3&l=a19b3affbb>