



# Mosaic

September 2007 | Issue 3

*This newsletter describes our ongoing diversity efforts with our clients, in our communities, and at our law firm. We believe that as we continue a dialogue we will create greater opportunities for advancement of diversity.*

## CARLTON FIELDS CELEBRATES DIVERSITY

Appreciation of diversity has long been recognized as one of the ten Core Values of Carlton Fields. The Firm celebrated that commitment to diversity during the week of May 7–11, 2007, which was designated **Carlton Fields Celebrates Diversity Week**. The week-long celebration highlighted the myriad of cultures represented within the Firm.

In prior years, the Firm observed single holidays that celebrated only one or a few cultures, ethnicities, or races at a time. Although the celebrations were open to all members of the Firm, they acknowledged only a fraction of the Firm’s attorneys and staff. Given the sizable diversity of the Firm, it was felt that a more global appreciation of diversity was necessary. To effect this change, the Firm’s Diversity Committee created a week-long festivity intended to celebrate all attorneys and staff and recognize them as integral parts of the diversity that makes Carlton Fields such a strong and successful firm.

**The week-long celebration highlighted the myriad of cultures represented within the Firm.**

Over the course of six months, subcommittees in each office planned a full week of events, the highlight of which was each office’s International Pot Luck Lunch. During other events that took place, members of the Atlanta, Orlando, and Tampa offices participated in international wine tastings, and members of the Orlando, St. Petersburg, and Tallahassee offices enjoyed international desserts. In St. Petersburg, Tallahassee, and West Palm Beach, office members attended English Tea parties, while the Miami office capped the week with an International Happy Hour. On Friday, all attorneys and staff firmwide were encouraged to wear jeans and Diversity tee shirts, which were provided by the Firm.

In announcing Carlton Fields Celebrates Diversity Week to attorneys and staff, President and CEO **Gary L. Sasso** reiterated the Firm’s commitment “to promoting an environment of inclusion, fostering innovation and creativity to compete in the global marketplace, and being the employer of choice for all of our attorneys and staff.” In all of those respects and more, the week was an unqualified success.

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## DIVERSITY PROFILE

### ANNIE HIOTIS: NOT JUST NUMBERS

By Kelly Cruz-Brown

For 15 years, **Annie Hiotis** has been involved in significant areas of the Firm's core business functions. In her current role as Executive Director, she is at the helm of overseeing the Firm's Marketing and Client Development, Finance, Information Systems, Attorney Recruitment, Human Resources, Professional Development, and Office Operations departments. Prior to being promoted to Executive Director in 2001, she served the Firm as Director of Office Operations and Human Resources. Her promotion to Executive Director was emblematic of the Firm's commitment to diversity, considering both that there are very few women executive directors for law firms of Carlton Fields' size, and that the Firm chose to promote from within rather than hire an individual from outside the firm.

Annie's experience in law firm finance, administration, and operations pre-dates her service at Carlton Fields. Prior to joining the Firm in 1992, Annie was the finance director and principal administrator for several mid-size to large law firms in Ohio and South Carolina. Her professional background also includes experience in other business and financial sectors; Annie was previously employed as a Certified Public Accountant with Arthur Anderson, where she worked in the auditing and tax departments in the early 1980s. She also served as Comptroller of a large construction sheet metal business.

Annie grew up in a multi-cultural neighborhood in Dayton, Ohio. Her father was a cosmetologist who owned his own business, and her mother was a homemaker. Both sets of her grandparents immigrated to the United States from Greece and lived in close proximity to her. As she explains, church activities were a focal point in her upbringing because the social structure of Greek society revolves around the church and church activities. Her paternal grandfather was a Greek Orthodox priest, and she learned Greek as her first language, although she became fluent in English by the time she began attending school.

Annie attended the University of Cincinnati, and was the first person in her family to graduate from college. In selecting a college, her choices were limited to schools close to home, as they were what she and her family could afford. When it

was time to select a major, Annie examined her options and majored in accounting, because she believed that it would afford her a sense of independence and would be the most intellectually challenging.

In her spare time, Annie is an avid golfer and enjoys playing the guitar. In fact, early on at college, she considered pursuing a professional music career. She also enjoys hiking, and loves to spend time at her cabin in North Carolina with her partner of 15 years, Connie, and their two cats, Leo and Lucy.

Hard work, dedication, professionalism, and loyalty are the reasons for Annie's professional accomplishments. She states that her parents instilled in her a strong work ethic, the belief that one should always be the best in whatever profession or job one chooses, and the goal to be financially independent. She believes that her gender has never impeded her professional development or success, primarily because she has stayed true to those values.

Regarding the future of law firm management and practice, Annie believes the industry is changing at light's speed and is becoming more and more competitive. She feels it is an exciting, but also a challenging, time. She says the Firm's commitment to diversity will assist in its efforts to continue to attract the best legal talent. In Annie's opinion, the Firm looks for talent in all facets and appreciates different perspectives because it improves the Firm's ability to solve client problems. She is a member of the Firm's newly formed Gay and Lesbian Equality Network and believes that the efforts of this affinity group will further support the strides the Firm is making with regard to diversity.

In her position as Executive Director of the Firm, Annie is proud of many things, but she is particularly proud that Carlton Fields' employees, especially the staff, have a genuine track record of giving back to their communities and that they practice and appreciate diversity on a daily basis.



Hiotis

## CARLTON FIELDS PRO BONO EFFORTS

Miami shareholder **Leo Lagomasino** (Insurance) recently took on the case of a 14-year-old girl who escaped from Mexico after her father tried to rape her. During her escape, the young girl was caught at the border and filed for asylum. The case was set for trial, but following briefing has been continued pending the finalization of a proposed administrative rule on the issue. Although the trial date is set for 2008, the continuance ruling effectively postpones the trial indefinitely, as the proposed rule has been pending for over seven years and there is no indication that it will be finalized in the near future. Thus, the case is still open but dormant until 2008, or until a new immigration bill passes, which would allow the girl and her mother to apply to stay in the U.S.



Lagomasino

As part of her efforts to help the girl and her mother obtain asylum, Leo filed a 20-page brief with supporting affidavits, a witness list and the *curriculum vitae* of a noted expert who would testify on their behalf. Her diligent work has earned her the accolades of many of her colleagues.

Interestingly, Leo was not originally assigned to this case. Miami shareholder **John Camp** (Products & Toxic Tort Liability) had agreed to handle the matter, but the child refused to meet with a male attorney. Leo immediately stepped in and volunteered to assume the pro bono matter. Since then, she has gone to great lengths for her client. When Leo first met the child, the young girl was so traumatized that she would not speak. Leo sought and arranged for free mental health counseling for both the mother and child, which has helped both of them dramatically. Upon discovering a conflict, Leo also went to great lengths to locate pro bono counsel to represent the girl's mother, who has been residing in the U.S. illegally. Leo traveled on numerous occasions from Miami to West Palm Beach to meet with her client and her client's mother to ensure that they kept their counseling appointments in Miami. The case required Leo to learn immigration law essentially from scratch, locate uncooperative witnesses in Mexico (the witnesses were afraid of the father), learn about Mexican rape laws (unbelievably, both the minor child and father could be prosecuted), and determine whether the laws would protect the child if she returned to her remote village.

Miami shareholder **Ana Harris** (Corporate, Securities & Tax) won a significant case in the Juvenile Division of the Dade County Circuit Court for a 14-year-old Haitian immigrant. Carlton Fields represented the young girl through the Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center. The ruling gives this young woman an opportunity for a stable home, financial support from the State, and a greater likelihood of naturalization.



Harris

Miami shareholder **Dan Vega** (Construction) and associate **Adrian Felix** (Business Litigation & Trade Regulation) recently obtained a great victory for a pro bono client. The client, Demetrius Harryton, purchased a used Land Rover from Vega Motors (no relation to Dan). Mr. Harryton lost his job after paying off all but \$700 on the car. When he requested an extension on the last payment, Vega Motors (through William Vega, the president) forced him to sign a new contract for an additional \$3,000.



Vega

Mr. Harryton subsequently paid the additional \$3,000 and then some, due to questionable late charges. When Mr. Harryton requested the title to the car, Vega Motors demanded that he pay additional money. Vega Motors made similar demands several more times; when Mr. Harryton refused for the last time, Mr. Vega threatened to tow the car.

Adrian, under Dan's supervision, sued Vega Motors and William Vega for breach of contract, declaratory relief, conversion, replevin, and violation of the Florida Deceptive and Unfair Trade Practices Act.



Felix

After obtaining final judgment in the client's favor, another demand notice was sent to Vega Motors with the additional threat of reporting the dealership and William Vega to the State Attorney's office. Mr. Vega immediately called and said he would send the certificate of title to the Mr. Harryton.

## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN LAWYERS

### PROVIDES ADVICE FOR WOMEN ATTORNEYS

By Kristy Johnson

Although many lawyers and legal observers believe women have made great strides in the legal profession, empirical evidence suggests that women's advancement has been fairly static in recent years. National law firm averages for women's advancement from 1999 until 2004 from the National Association for Law Placement demonstrate the percentage of women partners in law firms increased by only 2% during that time. In 1999, 15% of the partners in the United States were women; that number had risen to only 17% by 2004. Advancements were not drastically different for associates. In 1999, 41% of the associates practicing in law firms were women, while in 2004, that percentage increased by only 2%, to 43%.

As part of its efforts to improve women's advancement in law firms, the National Association of Women Lawyers (NAWL) is sponsoring a series of career development programs across the country. These programs are intended to help women lawyers jump start the process of learning the skills and information needed to obtain career success, leadership roles, and a sense of personal achievement. One of the recent programs, entitled, "Taking Charge of Your Career: Best Practices for Women Lawyers and Their Firms" provided useful advice on the ways in which women can advance their legal careers in a firm environment.

#### **Skills Needed to Progress in a Legal Career**

The first panel of the program discussed the skills women need to develop to progress in their legal careers.

##### Self-Evaluation

The first skill women must develop is an ability to assess both themselves and their organizations. A panel discussed the ways in which women often assess their competency inaccurately. By way of example, one panelist discussed a study conducted at Harvard Law School, which asked law students whether they perceived themselves to be in the top 25% of the class. Only 10% of the women students perceived themselves to be in the top 25%, while 80% of the men did.

Part of the explanation for the difference in how women assess themselves is that men are more likely to "bluff" and have

developed "bluffing skills" much better than women. Women are more likely to describe their successes as part of a team effort, while men are more likely to take individual credit for their successes. Women thus must learn to be more assertive in evaluating themselves and to not be afraid to take credit for their accomplishments.

##### Self-Promotion

The panelists provided many examples of how women can self-promote themselves, including meeting with key members of the firm and being visible on key firm committees. They noted it is important to find out which firm committees are the most significant, because some committees are not as important as others for purposes of advancing on the partnership track.

Of course, networking is a central aspect of self-promotion. The women on the panel emphasized that women must make time for networking. They also suggested that every woman should develop multiple 30 second introductions for a variety of situations. A woman needs to be able to talk to people, tell them who she is, what she does and provide enough information to enable someone to ask follow-up questions; she also needs to show a reciprocal interest in her conversational partner.

Women also must take calculated risks and push themselves beyond their comfort zone. It was suggested that one way to do this is to take projects in new areas. In doing so, women should not be afraid to stumble, because even stumbling blocks can sometimes open doors to new experiences.

##### Mentoring

Throughout the program, the panelists emphasized the importance of creating and maintaining healthy mentoring relationships. Every woman should have a personal board of directors as mentors, and her mentors should be people of varied backgrounds and experiences. Women should pick mentors whom they trust and who have a vested interest in their success. A woman also must contribute something of value to the mentor relationship, just as she is expecting something from her mentor. She must determine what it is she can bring to the mentor that will contribute to maintaining a healthy mentoring relationship.

## Client Relationships:

### How In-House Counsel Select Counsel

The second panel of the program discussed client relationships, with an emphasis on how in-house counsel select counsel and why. The panel was made up of three in-house counsel.

The consensus on the panel was that they hire lawyers not law firms. They look for brain power, expertise, and substantive knowledge. They stressed that lawyers must be responsive and have the resources to respond to time sensitive matters. Additionally, they look for lawyers with whom they have a natural rapport. They avoid lawyers who are condescending or overly aggressive, and desire lawyers who treat everyone in their offices with respect.

The panelists indicated that they hire lawyers who have a can-do attitude, are willing to get the job done, and show a genuine interest in the client's business. They also agreed that in-house counsel seek out lawyers who are dynamic and who are willing to take the time to build relationships with the company. The panelists emphasized that listening to the client's needs was very important; lawyers should always ask what they can do differently to improve the relationship with the client.

There also was extensive discussion about the importance of diversity in the selection process. The panelists explained that they want to see biographies of attorneys and statistics on a law firm's ability to hire and retain diverse lawyers. They sometimes will ask for retention rates and may even implement monitoring programs to ensure that the attorneys working on their files are diverse.

### Becoming a Leader

The final panel addressed "Becoming a Leader in Your Organization and Community." The central themes of this discussion were planning a career path, taking risks, taking advantage of certain opportunities and the different paths to success. The panelists discussed how women must be qualified professionally before they can succeed at anything

else. Professional credibility is a necessary precondition to obtaining leadership positions.

One panelist suggested that women may have to seek validation for their professional success from outside of their firms, because firms often do not provide enough validation. Suggestions for external validation included becoming a leader in community activities. If a woman invests in her "outside stock" by participating in community activities, she potentially can increase her "internal stock" within the firm.

With respect to achieving leadership within their firms, women must be their own advocates. They also must be visible and determine what the appropriate pathways to leadership are in their organizations. Here again, the advice of mentors is critical, because mentors can provide insight into the organization and information about how to succeed within it. There are always secret rules to success in every organization, and women must find mentors who are willing to disclose those secret rules. Once a woman identifies those persons who have been successful within her firm/organization, she can emulate the same paths to become a successful leader herself.

The panelists also emphasized the importance of developing a personal business plan and charting career goals for one, five, and ten years down the road. Such a plan should detail not only what a woman wants to accomplish, but also who is necessary to help her to fulfill her goals. It is imperative, however, to remain flexible and understand that goals often change over time. Taking a different path than outlined by a written plan is absolutely normal and should be expected. Thus, women must always be willing to reinvent themselves and never coast just to fit in.

In conclusion, the panelists were asked to impart the most valuable advice that they had received regarding their careers. They stressed the importance of taking risks, pacing your career for long-term success, and always being good at what you are doing at the moment.

This article is adapted from an article published in the FAWL newsletter. For more information about this or other FAWL programs, visit its website at <http://www.abanet.org/nawl>.

## ADRIANA DINIS AND SHANNON TAN TO JOIN CARLTON FIELDS AS 2007-2008 DIVERSITY FELLOWS

By Shannon Williams

As part of the Carlton Fields Diversity Fellowship at Stetson University College of Law, Carlton Fields will welcome two Stetson students in the 2007–2008 academic year. **Adriana Dinis** and **Shannon Tan**, both entering their final year of law school, will join the Firm’s Tampa office in the fall and spring semesters, respectively.

### Adriana Dinis

Prior to attending law school, Adriana graduated cum laude from the University of Florida, earning her B.A. in Criminology and Sociology.

Adriana is the first person in her family to attend and graduate from college. In the personal statement of her application for the Diversity Fellowship, Adriana shared that her family arrived in Venezuela from Portugal when her parents were both young. Her parents moved their family from Venezuela to the United States the summer before Adriana was to begin the third grade. At the time, Adriana merely believed she was coming to the United States for a Disney World vacation. She spoke no English and did not realize she was moving to the United States permanently.

During her second year at the University of Florida, Adriana’s family attained Legal Permanent Resident status, which she attributes to the dedicated hard work of her family’s attorney. It was that experience that sparked Adriana’s interest in attending law school. She hopes her own legal career will enable her to help others as much as her family’s attorney assisted them.

During the summer of 2006, Adriana participated in the Summer Institute in International and Comparative Law, in Hague, Netherlands, and Freiburg, Germany. During the program, she visited the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Court, the International Court of the Former Yugoslavia, the United Nations, the International Red Cross, the European Parliament, and the European Court of Human Rights. During the Spring 2007 semester, she served

*... [Adriana] hopes her own legal career will enable her to help others as much as her family’s attorney assisted them.*

as an intern for the Honorable Emily A. Peacock in the Circuit Court of the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit in and for Hillsborough County, Florida. Among other things during her internship, Adriana translated English to Spanish for pro se litigants. This past summer, Adriana worked for a small Tampa law firm.



Dinis

Adriana is looking forward to her Fellowship with Carlton Fields. She hopes to polish her writing skills, network with attorneys, and gain a greater understanding of the practical aspects of practicing law. She is hopeful that exposure to various practice areas will help her determine her areas of interest.

### Shannon Tan

Shannon will join Carlton Fields in the Spring 2008 semester. Prior to attending law school, Shannon enjoyed a career as a journalist. She has worked with *The St. Petersburg Times*, *The Indianapolis Star*, *The Miami Herald*, *The Boston Globe*, and *The Buffalo News*. This past summer, Shannon worked with an immigration attorney in Fowler White Boggs Banker’s Tampa office. In the Fall 2007 semester, she will participate in Stetson’s Civil Immigration Clinic.

Shannon received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Anthropology from Brown University in May 2001. She currently serves as the Tampa Bay Area Chair for the Brown Alumni Schools Committee.

Shannon was the first person in her family to graduate from an American university. Before going to Brown, she had never spent more than a few weeks away from her home in Singapore; yet she yearned for the chance to study in a new and different environment. She took a risk, packed two suitcases, and boarded a plane to Rhode Island, where she struggled to adapt to a new culture. Eventually she mastered the standard answer to the greeting that had so often baffled her, “what’s up?” She also learned to drive in the snow and discovered the joys of writing for newspapers.

Despite the fact that she completed Brown in three years to save money, Shannon revealed in her personal statement that she initially graduated without a diploma. After family financial crisis reached a peak, Shannon had thousands of dollars in unpaid tuition fees. Brown withheld her diploma until the fees were paid. Complicating her situation was the fact that Shannon was unable to obtain a loan for repayment because she was not a U.S. citizen. During her first job with *The Miami Herald*, she drove a car without air conditioning for a year so that she could pay off her outstanding tuition fees and obtain her diploma.



Tan

“eager to get the opportunity to work with and learn from talented lawyers at one of the most respected law firms in the Tampa Bay area.”

In 2004, Carlton Fields, in collaboration with Stetson University School of Law, established the Carlton Fields Diversity Fellowship. Each semester a law student is selected to receive a paid fellowship with the Firm. The fellowship is designed to assist students who have experienced socioeconomic or cultural barriers while pursuing a legal education. Throughout the semester, the Fellow is immersed in the practice of law within a large law firm environment.

Several years later, while working at the *St. Petersburg Times*, Shannon began to consider going to law school. When she received a scholarship from Stetson, she took the leap of faith to make a career change. After law school, Shannon would love to defend the rights of other non U.S. citizens and help them navigate the immigration system. Shannon says she is honored to have been selected for the Fellowship, and is

“We are committed to supporting students in their pursuit of legal training by providing opportunities to perform real legal work and access to the network of our attorneys who mentor them. We are delighted that Adriana and Shannon will be joining Carlton Fields as our next diversity fellows,” said **Jason Murray**, Carlton Fields’ Diversity Committee Co-Chair.

## CARLTON FIELDS FORMS GAY AND LESBIAN AFFINITY GROUP

On May 18, 2007, the Firm announced the formation of GLEN (Gay and Lesbian Equality Network), a new gay and lesbian affinity group led by **Nancy Faggianelli**, Tampa Shareholder and Co-Chair of the Firm’s Diversity Committee. The group presently is composed of both self-identified gay and lesbian attorneys, government consultants, paralegals, and executive staff in addition to non-gay and lesbian attorneys, government consultants, paralegals, and executive staff who support the group’s goals.

The group held its inaugural meeting in June, a symbolic month celebrated internationally by the gay and lesbian community as Pride Month. Following in the successful footsteps of the Minority Lawyer Network and the Women’s Initiative Network, GLEN seeks to promote greater understanding and dialogue on issues important to the Firm’s gay and lesbian employees. The group also will serve as a support network for these employees

by providing a safe and confidential forum in which to discuss the unique challenges gay and lesbian employees face regarding their personal and professional development.

Carlton Fields has always been a leader among its peers on issues of diversity and equal opportunity. The formation of a gay and lesbian affinity group is yet another historic benchmark to further that fine tradition. Over the next several months, GLEN members will be hard at work determining the scope of its membership, developing a mission statement, and refining its immediate and long-term objectives. Anyone wishing to participate in GLEN or desiring more information about the group should contact either **Nancy Faggianelli** or **Tom Grewe**, Director of Professional Development.



Faggianelli

## RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS OF OUR WOMEN AND MINORITY ATTORNEYS

Tampa shareholder **Sylvia Walbolt** (Appellate Practice & Trial Support) was featured in an article entitled "Breaking Barriers," which appeared in a recent issue of the *Bulletin* of the American College of Trial Lawyers.



Walbolt

Orlando shareholder **Sarah Long** (Products & Toxic Tort Liability) received a special recognition for her pro bono efforts from the Legal Aid Society and Chief Justice R. Fred Lewis.



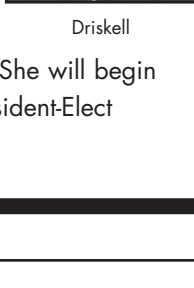
Long

Miami shareholder **Edith Osman** (Family Law) received The Women of Impact Award at the University of Miami sponsored by The Women's History Coalition of Miami-Dade County. Edith also was appointed by The Florida Bar Board of Governors to serve a two-year term as a Florida Bar Delegate to the ABA House of Delegates, and was elected to serve on the Board of Directors of the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce. She will join Miami shareholder **Patricia Thompson** (Construction), who was re-elected and has served for three years.



Osman

Miami shareholder **Nancy Ciampa** (Appellate Practice & Trial Support) recently became board certified in Appellate Law by The Florida Bar.



Ciampa

Tampa associate **Fentrice Driskell** (Business Litigation & Trade Regulation) was elected to the Board of Directors for Tampa Crossroads, Inc.

Miami shareholder **Amy Furness** (Products & Toxic Tort Liability) was elected President of the Florida Association of Women Lawyers. She will begin her term in June 2008 following a term as President-Elect that began June 2007.

Tampa associate **Amanda Arnold Sansone** (Business Litigation & Trade Regulation) is President-Elect of the Young Lawyers Division of the Hillsborough County Bar.



Sansone

Tampa shareholder **Kathy McLeroy** (Real Property Litigation) was sworn in as President of Bay Area Legal Services, a regional, non-profit public interest law firm which assists individuals and non-profit groups with limited access to legal services.



McLeroy

**Laurel Lockett**, Tampa shareholder (Government Law and Consulting), has been appointed Vice Chair of the Land Use and Environmental Group of the Real Property Probate and Trust Section of the American Bar Association. She will have oversight responsibility over the Environmental, Land Use, Condemnation, and Agribusiness Subcommittees.



Lockett

Tampa shareholder **Jaret Fuente** (Products & Toxic Tort Liability) was elected to the Board of Directors of The Tampa Connection.



Fuente

Tampa associate **Amy Leigh Carstensen** (Corporate, Securities & Tax) was selected for the *Gulf Coast Business Review* 40 Under 40.

Orlando shareholder **Mary Meeks** (Business Litigation & Trade Regulation) was recently elected to the Board of the Metropolitan Business Association of Central Florida, a gay and lesbian chamber of commerce.

Tampa associate **Penelope Dixon** (Products & Toxic Tort Liability) was accepted into Leadership Tampa's Class of 2008.



Shareholders **Katy Bell, Marti Chumbler, Lyn Harris, Nancy Henry, Ruth Barnes Kinsolving, Nancy Linnan, Laurel Lockett, Wendy Lumish, Marsha Madorsky, Edith Osman, Lu Prats, Gary Sasso, Patricia Thompson,** and **Sylvia Walbolt** were 14 of the 68 Carlton Fields attorneys selected for *Florida Super Lawyers 2007*.



Lumish

Shareholders **Kelly Cruz-Brown, Cristin Conley Keane, Ruth Barnes Kinsolving, Nancy Linnan, Laurel Lockett, Wendy Lumish, Lu Prats, Gary Sasso, Patricia Thompson,** and **Sylvia Walbolt** were ten of 33 Carlton Fields attorneys ranked among the top lawyers in the state of Florida in the recently-released *Chambers USA Guide to America's Leading Business Lawyers*.



Furness

Shareholders **Amy Furness, Nancy Henry, Nancy Linnan, Wendy Lumish, Edith Osman, Lu Prats, Gary Sasso, Patricia Thompson,** and **Sylvia Walbolt** were among 45 Carlton Fields attorneys selected by their peers as *Florida Trend* magazine's 2007 Florida Legal Elite, a select group comprising the top two percent of lawyers practicing in Florida.



Prats

Also included in that group were **Cristina Alonso, Jaret Fuente, Shannon Gray, Cristin Conley Keane, Nicole Kibert, Carlos Mas,** and **Amanda Arnold Sansone,** who were selected as Up-and-Comers.



Keane

Tampa associate **Chris Smart** (Real Property Litigation) organized a program entitled "Implementing Sustainable Development and Green Building through Land Development Regulations" presented on Thursday, April 26, 2007 in Washington, D.C. for the ABA Spring Meeting of the Real Property, Probate and Trust Law Section. Tampa associate **Nicole Kibert** (Real Estate and Finance) was the moderator of the session. In addition to the Washington audience, hundreds of lawyers heard the program as an "eCLE" (electronic continuing legal education) simulcast. This live presentation was preceded by an ABA Teleconference CLE entitled "Sustainable Development and Green Building Basics: Certification, Incentives and Your Practice" on February 20, 2007, where Nicole was a panelist and moderator along with her father, Dr. Charles Kibert, and Ralph Bennett for 191 participants.



Smart



Kibert

**Carlton Fields** was one of the premier sponsors at the *Orlando Business Journal's* 2007 Women Who Mean Business Awards. The awards ceremony was held on Thursday, March 29, 2007. As a sponsor, Carlton Fields had the opportunity to provide a video that was played during the awards ceremony. Orlando shareholders **Sarah Long** (Products & Toxic Tort Liability) and **Charlotte Warren** (Construction) appeared in the video, which spotlighted Carlton Fields' commitment to fostering a diverse workforce.



Liu

Miami shareholder **Jason Murray** (Business Litigation & Trade Regulation) and St. Petersburg associate **Jin Liu** (Real Estate & Finance) were panelists at The Florida Bar's 2007 Diversity Symposium on the topic of "Increasing Diversity in Corporate Law Offices and Law Firms: Techniques that Work," on April 13, 2007, at Florida International University College of Law, Miami, Florida.

## NEW MINORITY AND FEMALE ATTORNEYS

*Carlton Fields is pleased to announce the most recent minority and women attorneys to join the Firm.*

**Linda Frazier, Carlos Mas, and Dennis Olle** joined the Miami office in early 2007, after practicing at Adorno & Yoss, LLP.

**Linda Frazier** is a member of the Firm's Corporate, Securities & Tax practice group. Her primary areas of practice include corporate, securities, and general business law. She has represented a wide variety of both publicly and privately-held businesses in connection with general corporate matters, mergers and acquisitions, public and private offerings of securities, and joint ventures. She also advises public companies on compliance with their reporting obligations under the Securities Exchange Act, including compliance with Sarbanes-Oxley and corporate governance requirements.



Frazier

Linda was born in Tampa at MacDill Air Force Base, and lived in Tampa until she was 10. Her family subsequently moved to Turkey for a few years, and then to Miami, where she has lived ever since. Unsurprisingly, given her background, she loves to travel and usually always has her bag packed to go somewhere. For the past ten years, Linda has been active in a grassroots non-profit organization called LIFO ("Living Instruments for Others"), the goal of which is to empower and build cohesiveness in communities in the Dominican Republic. For each of the past six years, Linda has traveled with LIFO to the Dominican Republic to spend ten days at

a time building schools and aqueducts with members of these communities.

Linda received her B.S., cum laude, from Barry University in 1989, and her J.D. from University of Miami Law School in 1993. She is admitted to practice in both Florida and Massachusetts.

Also a member of the Firm's Corporate, Securities & Tax practice group, **Carlos Mas** represents various clients in connection with general corporate and transactional matters, including contract negotiation and preparation, corporate governance and employee relations, creation of partnerships, limited liability companies and corporations, mergers and acquisitions, and debt and equity financings.



Mas

Carlos also represents corporate clients in connection with public and private offerings of securities and SEC disclosure and corporate governance issues, and in connection with a variety of commercial loan transactions, including asset and mortgage financing, term loan agreements, revolving credit agreements, letters of credit, reimbursement agreements, and loan participation agreements.

Carlos is a native of Miami. His parents came to the United States from Cuba in 1961 and were among the first wave of Cubans who came to the United States. Carlos graduated magna cum laude from Florida International University and subsequently graduated from George Washington University School of Law.

Carlos and his wife, Lillian, have two children, Carlos, 3, and Andres, 3 months. In his free time, Carlos likes to spend as much time with his children as possible. He also enjoys watching movies.

**Dennis Olle** also is a member of the Corporate, Securities & Tax practice group. He has an extensive securities practice including public and private offerings, corporate disclosure, and mergers and acquisitions. He also represents clients in capital raising and all types of general corporate matters.

Dennis is a passionate environmentalist. His interest in the environment was cultivated while growing up in a small town on the Texas coast, where bird watching was a common pastime. He first began bird watching when he was 5 years old, but became more dedicated to the hobby when he became a lawyer, precisely because bird watching is so different from the practice of law. Over the past five years, his interest in bird watching has evolved into an interest in butterfly watching as well. These hobbies have allowed him to meet many interesting people and become an avid butterfly and nature photographer.

Dennis is the former President of the Tropical Audubon Society, and currently serves the Society as Director and Vice-President. He also serves as a Director of the North American Butterfly Association and is President of its Miami Blue Chapter.



Olle

Dennis received his undergraduate degree from Rice University. He received his law degree, with honors, from Columbia University, where he was a Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar. He and his wife, Leslie, have two grown children who both live in the San Francisco area.

**Alina Alonso** and **Stacey Sutton** were elected as shareholders in February 2007.

**Alina Alonso** is a member of the Appellate Practice & Trial Support practice group. She handles all aspects of appellate litigation in state and federal court, including brief writing and oral argument. Alina provides litigation support, including drafting and arguing case dispositive motions, and pre- and post-trial motions. Alina also provides legal assistance at trial, including handling motions for directed verdicts, complex evidentiary issues, and charge conferences. She has significant experience in coordinating mass tort settlements.



Alonso

Alina was born in Cuba, but left when she was 6 to move to Spain. She lived in Spain for two years before moving to Miami, and has been in Miami ever since, except for two years she spent living in Tallahassee while clerking for the Supreme Court of Florida. Alina's family resides in Miami, but she also has family still in Cuba, and she keeps in touch with them via weekly emails.

Alina is a big baseball fan. Her favorite

team is the Mets, and she tries to make it to New York at least once a year to make it to a game. She also roots for the hometown Florida Marlins. Coincidentally, Alina was in San Diego when Barry Bonds tied the major league home run record and in San Francisco when Bonds broke the record, but she did not attend either game.

Alina is extremely active in the American Bar Association and The Florida Bar and has held leadership positions in both. Prior to joining Carlton Fields, Alina served as a law clerk to the Honorable R. Fred Lewis of the Florida Supreme Court. She received her B.S., summa cum laude, from Florida International University in 1996, and received her J.D., cum laude, from University of Miami in 1999.

**Stacey Sutton**, a member of the firm's Business Litigation & Trade Regulation practice group, is an experienced commercial litigator whose practice is focused on business, education, and employment matters. She represents a wide range of clients, including major telecommunications companies on significant litigation matters, and defends employers against discrimination, retaliation, and harassment claims. Stacey has unique experience in litigating charter school issues and she also handles appeals and administrative matters.



Sutton

Stacey grew up in northern New Jersey, but she has lived all over the globe, including Seattle, New York City, Puerto Rico, London, Miami, San Francisco, and

Santa Cruz, California. She received her B.S. from Syracuse University in 1991 and her J.D., cum laude, from St. John's University School of Law in 1999. During her last year of law school, Stacey's 8 year-old daughter, Frances, was born. Stacey describes herself as a "meet mom," as she spends much of her free time attending Frances's swim meets. She and Frances also enjoy traveling and riding bikes with each other. In her remaining free time, Stacey likes to go to movies and read.

The Firm is pleased to announce the most recent of counsel and associates to join Carlton Fields.



Bivins

**Letisha Bivins** joined the Tampa office as an associate in the Corporate, Securities & Tax practice group. Prior to joining Carlton Fields, Letisha served as a law clerk for for The Honorable Marguerite H. Davis of the Florida First District Court of Appeals. Letisha also was a staff attorney for the Chief Judge's Central Staff of the Florida First District Court of Appeals. Letisha received her B.S., cum laude, from Florida A&M University in 1997, and her J.D. from Florida State University College of Law in 2003. In 2007, Letisha received an LL.M. in taxation from University of Florida Levin College of Law.

**Basha Hicks** joined the Miami office as an associate in the Real Estate & Finance practice group. Prior to joining Carlton

*Attorney profiles continued on page 12.*

## NEW MINORITY AND FEMALE ATTORNEYS CONTINUED

Fields, Basha practiced with Akerman Senterfitt. Her additional past experience includes serving as Legal Counsel for Plants In Design, Inc., and practicing with Ruden McCloskey and Shutts and Bowen, all in Miami. Basha received her B.S. from the University of Michigan in 1972, J.D. in 1987 from Harvard Law School, and her Ed. D from the University of Massachusetts in 1986.



Hicks

Intellectual Property & Technology practice group. Prior to joining Carlton Fields, Brooke was an associate at Greenberg Traurig in Atlanta. Brooke received her B.A. from Emory University in 2000 and her J.D. from Emory University School of Law in 2003.

**Rachel May** joined the Tampa office as an associate in the White Collar Crime and Government Investigation practice group. Prior to joining Carlton Fields,



May

Rachel practiced under the Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Middle District of Florida. She received her B.A., cum laude, from St. Lawrence University in 2002 and her J.D., cum laude, from Stetson University College of Law in 2004.

estate financing. Prior to joining Carlton Fields, Ralph was a partner at Adorno & Yoss, LLP. He received his B.A., with honors, from Florida International University in 1990 and his J.D. from Boston University in 1993.

**Gail Podolsky** joined the Atlanta office as an associate in the Intellectual Property & Technology practice group. Prior to joining Carlton Fields, Gail was an associate at Greenberg Traurig in Atlanta. Gail received her B.B.A. from Emory University in 2001 and her J.D. from Emory University School of Law in 2004.



Podolsky

**Erin Kinney** joined the Miami office as an associate in the Appellate Practice & Trial Support practice group. Prior to joining Carlton Fields, Erin served as a law clerk for Judge David M. Gersten and Judge Richard J. Suarez. Erin received her B.A., with highest honors, from the University of Florida in 1995 and her J.D. from the George Washington University Law School in 1998.



Kinney

**Rafael Moreno** joined the Miami office as of counsel in the Real Estate & Finance practice group. He has over twelve years experience in the representation of commercial lenders in the areas of acquisition, development, and permanent real



Moreno

**Victoria Rivas-Vazquez** joined the Miami office as an associate in the Family Law and Business Litigation & Trade Regulation practice groups. Prior to joining Carlton Fields as an associate, Victoria was a summer associate in the Miami office in 2006. She received her B.A. from Georgetown University in 1987 and her J.D. from the University of Miami School of Law in 2006.



Rivas-Vazquez

**Brooke Lewis** joined the Atlanta office as an associate in the



Lewis

For more information on the Carlton Fields Diversity Newsletter, *Mosaic*, please contact: **Kenya J. Reddy**, at 813.229.4331 or by email at [kreddy@carltonfields.com](mailto:kreddy@carltonfields.com)

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The material contained in this newsletter is general and summary in nature, and consists of highlights and information pertinent to clientele of Carlton Fields. It is not intended to be specific legal advice on any matters discussed. If you have questions regarding the content of this newsletter, please contact your attorney at Carlton Fields. The hiring of a lawyer is an important decision that should not be based solely upon advertisements. Before you decide, ask us to send you free, written information about our qualifications and experience.