

Beverly Hills Bar - Summary of Presentation
Cindy Pasternak

I. In the late 1990's I proposed a new committee, Women in the Legal Profession, to address the special challenges women face in their professional careers. While there are several other women lawyer groups in the Los Angeles area, I thought it was important to heighten the awareness of women's issues in an integrated bar. The Committee put on several programs, some better attended than others. After two years, it became apparent that other responsibilities made it too difficult for women to attend these self indulgent or "soft" programs on a regular basis and that most men were not interested in attending programs directed to women.

II. In the early 2000s, I began to contemplate the major themes I would propose for my year as President of the Association. Determined to raise our Association's consciousness of the work-life balance dilemma (but never having heard of the term "work-life balance"), I developed a comprehensive project, "The Working Parents Project" ("WPP") to address the legal and social issues working professionals, male and female, face when trying to balance family and career.

III. WPP:

A. Focused on 3 stages of life:

- (1) Early years - starting a family: problems conceiving and alternatives;
- (2) Middle years - career-family conflict in the workplace, changing employer policies, challenges raising children, legislative considerations; and
- (3) Later years - parenting one's own parents (caring for aging parents), planning for long term care.

B. Early in the planning stages of WPP, we were presented with an opportunity too good to resist: co-sponsorship of the Symposium portion of the project by the Pepperdine Law Review (which had been looking for a topic for its annual symposium). Pepperdine's involvement caused us to modify our original plans but expanded the scope of the program, and gave us very significant assistance and nationwide exposure.

IV. "Balancing Career and Family: A Work-Life Balance Symposium" ("WLB") – April 8, 2006:

A. Addressed legal and social issues working parents face trying to balance family and career, featuring 20 nationally recognized professionals.

- B. Keynote address: Calista Flockhart.
 - C. Employer of the Year Awards – for best family friendly work environment.
 - D. Child's Perspective - how students feel about having working parents.
 - E. Resource Guide.
 - G. Post-Symposium Law Review.
- V. WLB Formed as Standing Committee by BHBA Board of Governors - Continues to present cutting edge programs.