



MULTNOMAH BAR ASSOCIATION

100TH ANNIVERSARY

1906 - 2006

Hon. Ancer L. Haggerty

By Judy A. C. Edwards, MBA Executive Director.

“Aside from being a wonderful friend and always enjoyable to be with socially and in our practice of law together, he is one terrific racquet ball player. Although he is right-handed, he always played me left-handed and beat me every time!” John L. Schwabe

Judge Haggerty’s competitive spirit was highlighted in many of the conversations I had with people who have known him personally over the years. But what impressed me most, was the broad admiration for his character. It was a joy to write this profile because everyone I spoke with was effusive and eager to recount personal reminiscences about him.

Judge Haggerty was born in Vanport on August 26, 1944. After graduating from Jefferson High School in 1962, he earned a B.S. in 1967 from the U of O and subsequently served in the US Marine Corps from 1967-1970. In 1969, he was severely injured in combat in Vietnam. Afterwards, he received a J.D. at Hastings College of Law, UC in 1973 and was admitted to the Oregon Bar later that year.



His legal career started with the Metropolitan Public Defenders (MPD) from 1973-1977, followed by an 11-year practice at Schwabe Williamson & Wyatt, where he was a partner representing several major corporations and insurance companies in civil cases. He was a Multnomah County District Court Judge from 1989-90 and Circuit Court Judge 1990-93.

A federal judge since 1994, he became the first African-American to hold that position in Oregon. He has served as Chief Judge since 2002.

\* \* \* \* \*

Tom Phillips, a childhood friend shared, “I have known Ancer since grade school - Woodlawn School in NE Portland. We were in Cub Scouts together; his mother was our Den Mother. We did everything together, attended the same church, Woodlawn Methodist, and had paper routes together. We had lots of

Diversity is seen as a virtue.

Convocation on Equality, November 2001

fun delivering papers. On Sunday, we delivered the papers early in the morning, and then would go to breakfast at a local restaurant, with our own money! I spent time at his house with his family and he did the same; we are like members of each others’ families.

“Ancer has a big heart, is willing to help friends and family. He has a wicked sense of humor, and a wonderful laugh – he is the king of practical jokes. Ancer is VERY competitive. No matter what the activity, cards, cribbage, any sport activity, especially racquetball – which he plays several times a week.”

\* \* \* \* \*

Paul N. Daigle, retired partner at Schwabe Williamson & Wyatt, described his introduction to the judge. “In order for you to fully understand how I came to know Judge Haggerty I’ll give you a little bit of my background. Haggerty and I were both marine infantry officers. He was commissioned in 1967 after graduating from U of O. In March of 1965 I was seriously injured in a training accident that resulted in my eventual retirement from the marines. That fall, I enrolled at Hastings College of Law in San Francisco.

“Cut forward to the spring of 1970 and I’m now an associate in what is now Schwabe Williamson & Wyatt. I needed to renew my retired ID card and went to the marine officer recruiting station where I ran into Haggerty who was the assistant officer in charge ... We launched into a conversation about where we were stationed, what units we were with, etc. He learned that I was a lawyer but didn’t think his college grades were good enough. I replied that they couldn’t be any worse than mine and that the only secret to success in law school, in my opinion, was common sense and hard work. He had a distinguished record in Vietnam combat and returned with a silver star and a purple heart. I could tell by talking to him that law school would not be a problem for him. While I was in law school, the assistant dean and law review advisor was Joe Munster, a retired Navy JAG captain. For some reason, Munster loved marines. After meeting with Haggerty, I called Munster and told him I knew a marine lieutenant who wanted to be a lawyer, that the lieutenant had a silver star and purple heart and that his college grades were a lot better than mine.

“Haggerty attended Hastings and after his graduation, I tried to get him to interview with our firm but he was adamant that he wanted to work for the public defender where he could get a lot of trial experience. Four years later I ran into him in the

courthouse and reminded him that we were still interested. So he interviewed, was hired and eventually became a partner. He had a great personality and was a very popular member of the firm. He was a great card player and we had many late evenings at the University Club playing pitch.”

Daigle goes on to explain, “The Silver Star is the nation’s third highest award for valor in combat after the Medal of Honor and the Navy Cross.”

\* \* \* \* \*

Jim Hennings has been with the Metro Public Defenders (MPD) from its beginning and Judge Haggerty was their



first law student. Although they literally had no place to put Haggerty when he started, it sounds like they searched about the office and found some luxurious space down the hall, in a closet, with an old desk missing one leg but propped up with law books and lighted by a dangling bulb in the middle of his new office, a “classic Sam Spade type of office” said Hennings with a chuckle. But then, that was the beginning of the new experiment called public defense. Haggerty joined the MPD full time after graduating from law school, the same time that women started there.

Hennings described Haggerty as “One of the gentlest people I know, yet he gets his way when he needs to ... One time a client went out on a window ledge and the media sent over a reporter. When Haggerty learned this, he blocked the elevator entrance to the office and told the reporter that he would not be able to get past him ... He brought in Cliff Freeman and Kenny Walker to the office. Haggerty was a very good trial lawyer ... There were about 12 attorneys in the office when Ancer joined after law school, now there are 60 with 17,000 cases a year. We were sorry to see him go but it was a great opportunity for him and his great trial experience made a difference in his successful career in private practice ... Ancer never lets anything get in the way of anything he wants to do. He is a lesson to others and a great role model and example of what happens when we give people an opportunity. It was great fun having Ancer in the office.”

\* \* \* \* \*

(Continues on next page)

A Century of Service Historic Pullout: Diversity in the Bar

By Judy A. C. Edwards, Executive Director.

The July/August Multnomah Lawyer historic pullout focuses on diversity in the bar. We concentrated on people and organizations that have enriched the Portland legal community. We thank all who contributed to this issue.



Readers are encouraged to share their thoughts on any part of this pullout and we welcome your suggestions for topics in future issues. If you would like to write a story or article for the pullout, please contact me at judy@mbabar.org or 503.222.3275.

A Century of Service MBA 100th Anniversary Celebration

Premier Event Sponsor The Naegeli Reporting Corporation Producer of the MBA 100th Anniversary Video

Major Event Sponsors (\$2,500) Pacific Legal Washington Trust Bank

Event Sponsors (\$1,000) DJC Newspaper & Commerce Magazine Gevurtz Menashe Larson & Howe HMH Crisis Communications LexisNexis Nationwide Process Service, Inc. Northwest Employee Benefits, Inc. Preston Gates & Ellis Professional Liability Fund - Excess Program Tsongas Litigation Consulting

Contributors (\$500) Oregon State Bar Providence Health Plans



## Law Firm Diversity: An Associate's Perspective

By Yi-Kang Hu,  
Preston Gates & Ellis.



These days, many law firms have programs designed to recruit and retain quality minority lawyers. These employers understand that being more diverse provides their workforce with different perspectives, fresh ideas and more opportunities for problem solving. And as more clients and corporations put pressure on their attorneys to become more inclusive, diversity has become an important goal that can affect a firm's bottom line.

As a new attorney who qualifies as "diverse," I was asked to write a few words on what makes a law firm an attractive workplace for minority attorneys. Because this is a complex issue, I will focus my efforts on describing my own personal experience and particularly on why I chose to join Preston Gates & Ellis. I hope that my story will illustrate the importance of providing minority lawyers with mentors and role models in the overall recruitment and retention strategies of law firms.

### A Brief Biography: The Academic Years

I moved to Hawaii from Taiwan when I was 14 years old. With only one year of English lessons under my belt, I started attending high school right away and, needless to say, almost failed every class in my first semester. However, with the help and encouragement of my family and teachers (many of whom were second- or third-generation immigrants), I was able to catch up and even surpass my peers academically. During that time, I developed a special interest in science because it was logical and "made sense" to me. I had decided then that science would play an important role in my life.

After high school, I attended Reed College, where I majored in biochemistry and went on to earn a Ph.D. from OHSU. During those years, I enjoyed the intellectual challenge and rewards of higher learning, but also faced issues and setbacks associated with the rigorous curriculum. Fortunately, as in high school, I had influential mentors who believed in my potential and provided valuable support and guidance along the way. It was also helpful to be able to interact with other Asian-American and foreign-born scientists on a regular basis because their success served as a reminder that I, too, could "make it" with sufficient time and hard work.

During my scientific training, I began to appreciate the impacts of laws and policies on medical research and eventually reached the conclusion that a career involving both law and science would be a more fulfilling long term goal. As such, after earning my Ph.D., I made the difficult yet necessary transition of going to law school.

### From Science to Law: Variation on a Theme

I first became aware of Preston Gates's life sciences practice from reading Jeff Collins' article "J.D. + Ph.D. = Demand and career success." The article, which appeared in *OSB Bulletin*, featured Preston Gates attorney Carol Pratt's expanding practice

and the need to have lawyers with science background for serving Oregon clients. I contacted Carol to learn more about her practice and subsequently accepted an offer to work at the firm.

Looking back, there were two important factors that influenced my decision to join Preston Gates. First, I was impressed not only by the quality of the firm's attorneys, but also by the types of projects they work on everyday. Carol, for example, has a doctorate in neurophysiology and is one of the handful of attorneys who are skilled in handling regulatory issues relating to the FDA and human subject research. Another example is Don Pelto, an experienced intellectual property attorney who drafted one of the first patents on animal cloning. The diverse expertise of these attorneys not only makes Preston Gates a full service law firm, it also offers a new associate like me more opportunities for professional development.

The second factor that influenced my decision to join Preston Gates was the fact that I was able to talk with several Asian-American attorneys at the management level during the interview process. I was glad to learn that Howard Chen, an intellectual property partner, also spoke with a Chinese accent and that David Tang was the immediate past managing partner of the firm. This was a strong indication that the firm was not paying lip service to diversity by packing its lower ranks with attorneys of color while keeping white men in charge. Rather, it was committed to providing career advancement opportunities to all of its associates.

Having been at Preston Gates for over a year, my confidence in the firm's commitment to my career development has grown even stronger. My work assignments are interesting and challenging, and I receive regular mentoring and feedback on ways to improve my lawyering skills. I have also had more direct client interactions than anticipated, which will enable me to develop the client management skills needed for a successful law practice. I look forward to working with the attorneys at Preston Gates for many years to come and developing a fulfilling practice along the way.

### Concluding Remarks

To attract and retain quality associates, a law firm not only needs to be able to offer interesting and challenging work, it must also take an active interest in the career development of its associates and offer the hope of long term career advancement. This is of particular importance to minority lawyers and often they need additional support in identifying mentors and role models. I hope that one day soon I will become one of those role models and encourage more minority attorneys to enter into and stay in the field.

## MBA Commemorative Publication Now Available

We are pleased to announce the new publication that commemorates MBA's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The beautiful, softbound compendium of historical MBA and law-related events, significant court cases and lawyers who have made their mark in the legal community is easy to read, yet pays serious tribute to the many who have contributed to MBA's *A Century of Service*.

Everyone who purchased a ticket to the May event or donates to the MBA 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Community Gift Fund receives a free copy. To purchase a copy, please contact the MBA at 503.222.3275.

## OGALLA Formed in 1991

By Geoff Wren.

In 1990, an enterprising group of lawyers and legal workers, with critical support from the Stoel Rives firm, formed a steering committee to create a new organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered lawyers, legal workers and law students. The work of the steering committee resulted in creation of OGALLA, the Oregon Gay and Lesbian Law Association. OGALLA held its organizational meeting in January 1991. Members elected the first Board of Directors with Mark Johnson and Jamie Ross as Board co-chairs. Mary Overgaard and Jeff Payne currently serve as co-chairs.



Mary Overgaard, Michael Edgel, Yi-Kang Hu, Jeff Payne and Jamie Troy. Center, 2005 OGALLA Annual Dinner Speaker The Hon. Jean Dubofsky, Colorado Supreme Court Justice 1979-87

The founders of OGALLA envisioned the organization playing various roles, including sponsoring legal and political advocacy, educating the public about the causes of and cures for discrimination, providing social and networking opportunities for sexual minorities in the law and fostering unity among members while respecting our diversity.

OGALLA faced a particular challenge in its first two years fighting Ballot Measure Nine, an anti-gay initiative sponsored by the Oregon Citizens' Alliance. OGALLA responded with creation of a speakers' bureau. Members traveled throughout the state to speak out against the disease of discrimination. OGALLA also began sponsoring legal advocacy, including a challenge to the University of Oregon's housing policy and various ballot title challenges.

Over the years since, OGALLA members have played critical roles in Oregon's legal community. Many members have become judges in both the circuit and appellate courts. One of the founding members served as President of the OSB. Another diligently served in the Oregon Legislature and then as an OGALLA Board co-chair. Current board members have developed and maintained our Web site. And many members have tirelessly championed causes on behalf of sexual minorities.

OGALLA has sponsored various CLE programs since its founding. Topics have included domestic partnership law, civil rights issues involving sexual minorities and legal issues regarding sexual minorities in employment.

OGALLA meanwhile has provided a means for members and those who support the organization to connect and build relationships. In October 1991, OGALLA held its first dinner with Congressperson Les Aucoin as keynote speaker. The dinner has been held each October, and has been consistently well attended by members and guests, including various politicians and members of the judiciary. The dinner gives members the chance to connect and the larger community the opportunity to show support for OGALLA's members and purposes. Periodically during the year, OGALLA hosts social events. The

socials provide important networking opportunities for its members and those interested in joining. OGALLA members also serve as mentors for law students and young lawyers.

Membership in OGALLA is open to anyone in the legal community who supports the organization's purposes. For information about OGALLA, please see our Web site at [www.ogalla.org](http://www.ogalla.org).

## Hon. Haggerty

(Continued from p. 1)

"I have known Ancer since I joined the MPD in 1976. In those early days, he was my mentor in the courtroom and my adversary on the racquetball court," said Judge Julie Frantz.

"To this day we play team cribbage monthly. Only he, however, keeps the win/loss tally, and is known to gloat when victorious and ignore his opponents when defeated. As I sit in chambers behind the desk that once was his while on the Circuit



Judge Haggerty

Court bench, I think about all that makes Ancer such an extraordinary person and role model: his readiness to help, his positive outlook and infectious laugh and his commitment to ideals of justice and fairness. Now, if I could only forgive him for shoving my sick dog onto the MPD elevator in 1977, which I found wandering Fifth Avenue, on my way to get the car to take her to the vet."

\* \* \* \* \*

Joe Willis, partner at Schwabe Williamson & Wyatt: "My dearest memories of Ancer come from his work with my sons. My youngest son, John, won a city championship as a freshman wrestler at Cleveland in large part due to Ancer's coaching. Ancer and I went to the meet together. While the coach was focused on another of his wrestlers on the mat, Ancer noticed John was pacing, skipping and looking pretty nervous. With good reason.

(Continues on next page)



## Profile of a Pioneer: Judith D. Kobbervig

By Lisa  
Umscheid,  
Ball Janik.



Ask this lawyer - who entered the bar in 1969 - what advice she has for young African-American and women lawyers today, and her answer is emphatic: "Have patience. You can't change the world overnight."

Ask her what has changed most in the bar during her 36 years of legal practice, most of it as an employment lawyer in the US Attorney's Office in Portland, and her answer is equally as emphatic: "When I started practicing, there were virtually no women in law firms, and certainly no African-American women. That has changed."

Judith D. Kobbervig is a genuine pioneer in the bar in the Multnomah County. After earning her J.D. from Valparaiso University in 1969, she entered the bar in Indiana the same year. She began her career working in legal services in Chicago. Then, from 1971 to 1975, she worked as a legal aid lawyer in Portland. She remembers that, shortly after her arrival in Portland, she received a phone call from attorney John Toran, who



Judith D. Kobbervig

jokingly told her that he was coming to her office to pay her a visit. He had heard that there was a new African-American lawyer in town, and he wanted to see her before he would believe it. Judy believes that, at that time, she and the late Hon. Mercedes Deiz were the only African-American women lawyers practicing in the Multnomah County area.

In 1975, she altered her career path, and began working in the federal courthouse, a decision that would affect her career until she retired in April 2005. From 1975 to 1977, she served in the clerk's office in the US District Court in Portland, screening emergency motions, handling a variety of sophisticated intake and case-related duties and conducting legal research for the district court judges.

In 1977, she accepted a position as an Assistant US Attorney, working under Sid Lezak, the legendary long-serving US Attorney. At the US Attorney's Office, Judy defended employment discrimination cases filed against a wide range of federal agencies in federal court discrimination and employment-related litigation.

Her beginning in the employment defense bar was serendipitous. She remembers

that Jeff Rogers, later the long-time City Attorney for the City of Portland and at that time an Assistant US Attorney, handed her a stack of employment discrimination files because, as she says now, "No one else wanted to do this work back then. It's hard work. The cases are hard." And almost 30 years of employment defense practice began. Judy started practicing employment law, and watched as the field became more and more popular until it became what it is today - a recognized legal specialty.

Judy credits her success to perseverance, as well as the support of "good, life-long friends" and great mentors. Among her mentors, she lists the late Sid Lezak, the US Attorney appointed by President Kennedy, who originally hired her in the US Attorney's Office, and Paul Kelly, who supervised her at Legal Aid in the 1970s and who later rose through the ranks as an in-house lawyer and executive at NIKE.

Judy freely acknowledges that earning acceptance from colleagues and opposing counsel was, at times, difficult. She credits her success not only to her "great supervisors" over her many years in the US Attorney's Office, but also to a full circle of life-long friends who have supported her and her work.

### Hon. Haggerty

(Continued from previous page)

John had to wrestle a kid that had beaten him three straight times before in various meets.

"Ancer slipped out of the stands and took John over a bit from the others and pretty soon Ancer had his jacket off and was locked up head-to-head with John as wrestlers do in the standing position. He was also very quietly talking him through what his best moves were, what he thought his opponent's weakness may be. Ancer slipped back to sit next to me as John was called to the mat. John threw the pancake when his overconfident opponent immediately shot to take him down. John pinned him in about 20 seconds of the first round to take the City Championship. I went nuts. Ancer smiled quietly ... The Cleveland varsity wrestling coach remembered Ancer from high school wrestling where he took second in the state tournament (he had a badly injured ankle that kept him from his championship). Ancer went on to play football (as a walk-on) and wrestle for the Ducks for Oregon. He won the PAC 8 heavyweight wrestling championship. He wrestled up a weight from his true 191 lb. class to do it so he really took on the big guys."

Dave Bartz, president and partner, Schwabe Williamson & Wyatt. "He used to carry a little notebook around with evidence cases and procedural rulings. As a new associate you could go to him and skip the library; and, pick up a good story or two to boot. Another story was from the time I took the bar exam. The good judge likes his cars and has owned more than one Porsche.

"Well, my car at the time of the Bar was a beat up '64 VW. At the actual exam I had removed the passenger seat so I could lie down for a nap at lunch (having gotten no sleep in prep for the exam). I was lying in the car when the judge and another lawyer walked by (both were on the board of bar examiners) and the judge made a comment about my car as he walked past: 'that car belongs to one of our new associates and as soon as he starts work we are going to make him get a new car ...' Upon hearing that I sat up and said hi to the judge. He hadn't seen me lying in my

car and it was the only time in my life I've seen him embarrassed."

Elden Rosenthal recalled his experience with the *Mulugeta Seraw vs. Metzger* lawsuit, one of Oregon's legal cases of the century, and his admiration for Judge Haggerty. Seraw, an Ethiopian, was brutally murdered by local skinheads who were associated with a southern California neo-nazi. Elden represented the family of Seraw in a lawsuit against the neo-nazi organization and its founder/operator. "Of course it was a very emotionally charged case with lawyers, defendant's and plaintiff's families and judge all having body guards. This was combined with tremendous press scrutiny.

"Judge Haggerty handled the case with incredible dignity and fairness and fortitude, even though outlandish racist evidence was presented. He never exhibited anything but professionalism and exemplary judicial conduct throughout the trial."

Mike Schrunk, Multnomah County DA and MBA past president recalled, "Many know Judge Ancer L. Haggerty only as a state or federal judge where the stories are legion of his fairness, integrity, scholarship and compassion coupled with his ability to tackle tough cases, move them along and make tough no nonsense decisions. There is another side to the judge - student, athlete, married family man and community volunteer.

"Judge Haggerty is always working in the community, volunteering, coaching and proud of the achievements of his son and two daughters. All this while cutting his own grass, painting his own house, doing his own plumbing and mentoring young men and women in the community. Then there is the occasional racquetball game."

## MBA 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Community Gift Fund Surpasses \$238,000!

Congratulations to our MBA 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Community Gift Fundraising Committee, led by past MBA president, Mike Greene. The purpose of the fund is to increase civics education and participation and it will be administered by the newly formed Multnomah Bar Foundation. The MBA kicked off the fundraising campaign by committing \$50,000 to the fund. Listed below are those who have already made their generous donations or pledges. More names will be added throughout the year. If you want to add your name to the list, please contact Guy Walden at the MBA at [guy@mbabar.org](mailto:guy@mbabar.org) or 503.222.3275.

### Founder Donors (\$20,000)

Miller Nash  
Schwabe, Williamson & Wyatt  
Bullivant Houser Bailey

### Centennial Partner Donor (\$10,000)

Davis Wright Tremaine

### Centennial Benefactor Donors (\$5,000)

Ater Wynne  
Ball Janik  
Barran Liebman  
Cosgrave Vergeer Kester  
Dunn Carney Allen Higgins & Tongue  
Harrang Long Gary Rudnick  
Lane Powell  
Markowitz, Herbold, Glade & Mehlhaf

Perkins Coie  
Preston Gates & Ellis  
Stahancyk, Kent, Johnson & Hook  
Stoel Rives  
Tonkon Torp  
Williams Love O'Leary Craine & Powers

### Centennial Patron Donors (\$2,500)

Michael H. Bloom  
Foster Pepper Tooze  
Garvey Schubert Barer  
Greene & Markley  
Kennedy, Watts, Arellano & Ricks  
Multnomah Bar Association  
Young Lawyers Section  
Sussman Shank  
Yates Matthews & Associates

### Centennial Supporter Donors (\$1,000)

Ruth Beyer  
Marc Blackman  
Monte Bricker  
David A. Ernst  
John R. Faust Jr.  
George H. Fraser  
Walter H. Grebe  
Michael A. Greene  
Leonard Girard  
Michael Haglund  
Susan M. Hammer  
Edwin A. Harnden  
Don H. Marmaduke  
Jeffrey S. Matthews  
Albert Menashe  
Lynn Nagasako  
Robert J. Neuberger  
Robert D. Newell  
Katherine O'Neil  
Simeon D. Rapoport  
Steven V. Rizzo  
Michael Simon  
Judy Danelle Snyder  
Sylvia E. Stevens  
Thomas H. Tongue  
Mark R. Wada

### Centennial Donors (\$500)

Mona Buckley  
Nancie K. Potter  
Noreen Saltveit McGraw

## Appreciation to The Naegeli Reporting Corporation

An MBA video to commemorate the MBA's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration was produced by The Naegeli Reporting Corporation. They donated all services relating to the video, including taping more than 10 hours of raw footage, adding interesting photos, writing the script, selecting music and providing voice overs. Most importantly, they edited the many hours of raw footage into an insightful, effective and first-rate video about the MBA, its members and its many projects over the years - a video that will be appreciated for years to come. We especially want to express our appreciation to owners Marsha Naegeli and Troy Moody and videographers Michael Gramza and Travis Shields. The company presented a complimentary copy of the video to each attendee at the May event. Thank you Marsha, Troy, Michael and Travis for your generosity and your fine work.



## Building a Community

By Lynn Nakamoto,  
Markowitz Herbold  
Glade & Mehlhaf.

In 1903, McCants Stewart became the first African-American lawyer in Multnomah County and all of Oregon.

Stewart was a sole practitioner in Portland. He worked to better the civil rights of African-Americans and co-founded *The Advocate*, a newspaper for the black community. Unable to make a living in Portland, he left the state.

Fast forward to 1939, when Minoru Yasui graduated with honors from the U of O Law School and became the only Japanese American attorney in Oregon. He was unable to find employment in Oregon, so he worked for the Japanese consulate in Chicago. After Pearl Harbor, he returned to Portland and opened a law practice to help the Japanese community. However, he was arrested by the Portland police when he challenged the curfew law applied to



McCants Stewart and family

Japanese Americans. The US District Court for the District of Oregon amazingly found that he had renounced his citizenship by working for the Japanese consulate. He was incarcerated in solitary confinement. Ultimately, the US Supreme Court reviewed his case. Not surprisingly, Yasui did not return to practice in Oregon, choosing instead to continue his career in Colorado.

By 1975, the short-lived Oregon careers of Stewart and Yasui were history, but the isolation that they experienced was not. At that time, the OSB focused attention on the dimly low numbers of attorneys of color in the bar. The 27 attorneys of color in Oregon comprised one-half of 1% of active bar membership. That percentage was vastly disproportionate to that of racial minorities living in Oregon at the time.

In 1975, at the recommendation of the Civil Rights Committee, the OSB established the Affirmative Action Program (AAP), with the goal of achieving "representation of minority persons in the Bar in the same proportion as they are represented in the population of Oregon, while at the same time not lowering the standards for admittance." Since then, the AAP has contributed to a gradual increase in the number of lawyers of color in the bar.

I moved to Oregon in 1987 from New York City. I was shocked to experience the overwhelming paucity of people of color in the general population and more so in the bar relative to New York. I have

still not forgotten instances of lawyers assuming that as an Asian woman, I probably was a recent immigrant and they had to speak very slowly and clearly for me. I have clear memories of white attorneys insinuating at depositions that I had trouble reading English. I certainly questioned whether Oregon was a place to stay.

In the 1980s, the Association of Oregon Black Lawyers (AOBL) was the sole organization for lawyers of color in Oregon. Then, over 15 years ago, a number of attorneys started meeting regularly



OMLA members at the annual auction

in Portland – some AOBL members, Asian American attorneys and Hispanic attorneys – to talk about forming a larger organization and to develop a community of lawyers of color. Some of those lawyers had been practicing since the 1970s, and some were lawyers of more recent vintage. On June 13, 1991, Oregon Minority Lawyers Association (OMLA) was incorporated.

OMLA's mission is to promote fair and just treatment of all people under law regardless of race or color; to further the professional development and advancement of lawyers and law students who are people of color; to offer social opportunities for lawyers, law graduates and law students who are people of color; and to educate members, the public, and the legal profession about legal issues affecting people of color. OMLA's members knew from the beginning that a sense of community makes a real difference for lawyers and law students of color, and that a community of lawyers and law students of color would benefit the profession, clients and the public we serve.

Thankfully, progress has been made to diversify the bar. As of the end of last year, 701 lawyers, or 5.5% of OSB members, self-identified as ethnic minorities. But that number still falls short of proportional representation of Oregon's racial minority population. According to the US Census Bureau's estimates for 2005, racial minorities comprise 9.1% of the state's population. The Multnomah County figure is even higher. The Census Bureau's 2004 American Community Survey for the county states that an estimated 19.1% of household residents were racial minorities.

The renewal of the bar's AAP is up for a vote before the House of Delegates on September 16. We need to continue the effort to diversify the bar so that it is representative of everyone in our state. AAP is a part of that effort, as are bar organizations like OMLA, the Oregon Chapter of the National Bar Association, and the local affiliate of the Hispanic National Bar Association. The MBA has also committed itself to promoting diversity in the practice of law and I encourage my fellow MBA members to actively support the AAP and bar associations like OMLA.

## MBA 100th Anniversary Celebration

1



2



3



4



5



6



1. MBA Board 2006/07
2. YLS Board 2006/07
3. MBA Past Presidents
4. MBA 100th Anniversary Committee Chairs
5. Founder and Centennial Partner Donors and Premier Event Sponsor
6. Susan Marmaduke cuts a rug with her father Don Marmaduke on his 80th birthday