

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN LAWYERS
the voice of women in the law™

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THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN LAWYERS
RELEASES RESULTS OF NATIONAL SURVEY

CHICAGO: Today, the National Association of Women Lawyers (NAWL)[®] released the results of NAWL's first national Survey on Retention and Promotion of Women in Law Firms. The Survey, which was completed by a majority of the nation's 200 largest law firms, was designed to collect accurate data concerning the leadership status of women lawyers in private practice. A full copy of the survey results is available from NAWL.

"In some ways, the results are surprising and in some ways, they are not," says Cathy Fleming, President of NAWL and a partner at Edwards Angell Palmer & Dodge LLP. "For example, the Survey shows that women lawyers are well-represented at the lowest level of the profession, constituting 45% of associates, but not at the top of the profession. Overall, women make up only 16% of equity partners. Representation in the equity partnership during prime earning years (between 10 and 25 years' experience in the profession) is better; in that group, women account for about 20% of the equity partners. The Survey also found that women account for 28% of of-counsel lawyers and 26% of non-equity partners."

The Survey also measured two other areas that are typically overlooked in statistical research: women's roles in governance of firms and women's compensation relative to men's compensation at similar levels of seniority. "The anecdotal evidence seems to be correct regarding differences in compensation levels," says Lorraine Koc, Immediate Past President of NAWL and General Counsel/Vice President at Deb Shops, Inc. "Even when women lawyers achieve the formal status of equity partner within a firm, there appears to be a gap in compensation between male and female equity partners. The Survey also found that women play a less extensive role in the governance of law firms, with only 16% of governance committee members and 5% of managing partners being women."

This Survey is one of the initiatives taken as part of the NAWL 2015 Challenge, which was issued in July 2006. The NAWL Challenge calls for law firms to double the number of women equity partners and for corporations to double the number of women chief legal officers by 2015. Fleming believes that the NAWL Challenge and the 2006 National Survey are two sides of the same coin. "What gets measured gets done," she says. "By providing quantitative benchmarks on the retention and promotion of women attorneys, NAWL expects to help advance the cause of women in the legal profession."

NAWL is the leading national voluntary organization devoted to the interests of women lawyers and women's rights. Founded over 100 years ago, NAWL has members in all 50 states and engages in a variety of programs and activities to advance its mission. More information can be found at www.nawl.org.

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