



The NAWL Foundation®

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For Immediate Release November 15, 2012

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THE NAWL FOUNDATION RELEASES FIRST-EVER NATIONAL SURVEY OF WOMEN'S INITIATIVES IN LAW FIRMS.

(Chicago, IL) – Today, The NAWL Foundation®, the research and charitable arm of the National Association of Women Lawyers (NAWL), released the results of its National Survey of Women's Initiatives: The Strategy, Structure And Scope Of Women's Initiatives In Law Firms, the first-ever national survey of its kind. The Survey provides benchmark data about the types of activities that take place under the sponsorship of women's affinity groups in law firms, the funding, oversight and expectations for such groups, and the factors that enhance or impede the success of women's initiatives. Among the conclusions of the study are that women's initiatives need to take a more strategic approach to their goals and activities, and also that firms are not devoting enough resources to women's initiatives, especially in light of the positive business impact that strong women's affinity groups can provide.

NAWL Foundation President Stephanie Scharf, author of the study, expressed the Foundation's "excitement at sponsoring and bringing the results of this research to the legal profession. For the first time, law firms and women's initiatives will have objective data with which to assess their activities and make decisions going forward about how their women's initiatives can best work to advance women lawyers."

"In describing the strategy, financing, governance, structure and scope of activities of women's initiatives, the Survey provides a national context for assessing the impact of women's initiatives," said Barbara Flom, co-Chair of the NAWL National Survey Committee and Secretary of the NAWL Foundation. "An important message from the results is the need to focus more clearly on concrete strategies and techniques to enable women lawyers to advance in firms."

Pat Gillette, co-Chair of the NAWL National Survey Committee and partner at Orrick, Herrington and Sutcliffe LLP, observed that "our hope is that law firms use the data from the Survey to enhance the impact of their women's initiatives – to understand how women's initiatives can be important to the business of the firm and provide the support that women's initiatives deserve."

Roberta Liebenberg, NAWL Foundation Board Member and a partner at Fine Kaplan and Black, said "Unfortunately, the pace of progress for women at most law firms has been unacceptably slow, and therefore the NAWL National Survey on Women Initiatives is vitally important because it shines a much-needed spotlight on innovative and effective strategies that law firms can utilize to

empower their women lawyers and enable them to advance and succeed. Women's Initiatives can be an effective vehicle to make sure that women lawyers are being provided with fair and equitable assignments; are given appropriate origination credit; and are being groomed for succession and for leadership positions within the firm."

For more information, about The NAWL Foundation's research and charitable activities, please visit www.nawlfoundation.org.

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