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**January 2012 Bar Bulletin**

## MAMAS Honors Judge Fletcher

**By Sara Baynard-Cooke**

The Mother Attorneys Mentoring Association of Seattle (MAMAS) presented its annual Leadership and Justice Award to the Honorable Betty B. Fletcher of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals during its annual banquet on November 10. Judge Fletcher was introduced by two of her four children, Katherine Fletcher and Dr. Paul R. Fletcher. More than 270 people attended the event at the W Seattle Hotel.

Judge Fletcher, who was appointed to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals by President Carter and confirmed by the U.S. Senate in 1979, opened her acceptance remarks by stating that being honored by MAMAS means more to her "than any of you can imagine." "I have decided to bare my heart, and to give you some quite intimate glimpses of my life as a working mother," she said.

She explained that her path as a working mother was full of discrimination and lack of understanding of the needs of a working mother. Judge Fletcher spoke of the challenges she faced in law school and in securing her first job at a law firm. She said that she was blessed on the home front by a supportive husband - Robert L. Fletcher, emeritus professor of law at the University of Washington School of Law - and self-sufficient children. Judge Fletcher shared stories of raising her children and closed with a few rules that were important to her and her husband, such as making sure their children always knew that nothing was more important than they were.

"MAMAS was very honored to have Judge Fletcher speak at the annual banquet," said Rachel Black, president of MAMAS. "Judge Fletcher was a trailblazer and serves as a role model for all mother attorneys."

The Leadership and Justice Award is given each year to an individual who has paved the way to success for and has served as an inspiration to other women attorneys striving to excel in their legal careers while balancing family demands.

MAMAS is an organization dedicated to furthering the interests of attorney mothers in the legal profession. Founded in October 2006, it has grown quickly in both numbers and prominence. MAMAS currently has nearly 600 members and has branched out to include six sister chapters throughout the nation.

Among its many goals, MAMAS aims to empower mother attorneys and facilitate their success in the legal profession. To this end, MAMAS hosts monthly networking events and brown bag lunches, which at times have drawn crowds of more than 80 members. The lunch seminars feature panel presentations of particular interest to mother attorneys.

This past year, we have featured topics including "Finding Satisfaction and Balance in Your Job;" "Business Development: How to Get and Keep the Clients You Want;" "Successful Negotiations: Tactics and Strategies;" "Career Development: Many Paths to Success and Satisfaction;" and "Are You Being Fairly Compensated?"

MAMAS networking events, which members attend with their children, provide a venue for mother attorneys to network, socialize and problem solve in a supportive and child-friendly environment. In addition, MAMAS has an active mentoring program and maintains an active listserv where members exchange information on a variety of topics, including client referrals, practice areas, work-life balance issues, childcare options and more.

Information about MAMAS is available at [www.mamaseattle.org](http://www.mamaseattle.org).

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