

w o m e n

lawyers section of the bba



notitia

Announcements

Welcome to the January – February 2009 Editions of the Notitia!

The Notitia is one of the many tools the Women Lawyers Section of the Birmingham Bar Association uses to encourage the participation of women in the practice of law, to enhance the quality of life for women who have chosen law as a profession, to provide role models and mentors for women seeking to enter or grow in the profession, to provide an environment which fosters cooperation between and among women in the profession thereby enhancing the profession as a whole.

All members of the Birmingham Bar Association are invited to join our Section in 2009!

Membership runs from Dec. 1, 2008 - Nov. 30, 2009, but you can join at any time during the year. As of June 26, 2008, there were **429 members** of the Section. Here is a generic membership form: [BBA Membership Renewal.pdf](#) - You will need to put your name somewhere on the form and return it to Beth Carmichael at the Birmingham Bar. You can also become a Sustaining Member of the Section by sending your additional \$30 contribution to Sidney Hoover c/o the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama, 500 Beacon Parkway West, Birmingham, AL 35209-3108.

Would you like to work with one of the committees or task forces in 2009 on a particular project or event? Reply to Pam Blalock if yes (pblalock@bcbsal.org).

Please submit your articles or photos or reminders for the **March - April 2009 Editions** of the Notitia to Rebecca Amthor (RAmthor@bcbsal.org) or Michelle Obradovic (Michelle@WiseResolution.com).

Reminders for Section Activities and Events:

The Leadership of the Section meets on the second Tuesday monthly at the YWCA of Central Alabama, 309 North 23rd Street, Birmingham. Attendees who have ordered a lunch will be served at 11:30, with the meeting to begin thereafter. You may bring your own lunch if you like.

Board Retreat – Carol Stewart has graciously offered to host our Board retreat on Saturday, January 31. We will gather at 9:30 and hope to enjoy a pot-luck lunch and be finished by 2. Carol's house is located at 2641 Crest Road, Birmingham, AL. RSVP to Pam Blalock (pblalock@bcbsal.org) by Friday, January 23, 2009.

Nina Miglionico "Paving the Way" Leadership Award

The Women Lawyers Section is looking for nominees for the Nina Miglionico "Paving the Way" Leadership Award. A nominee should be a lawyer who has achieved professional excellence and assisted women lawyers to achieve their potential through mentoring, providing a professional role model or providing opportunities for the advancement of women lawyers. There is still time to submit a nomination for some deserving lawyer. Nomination Form: [Paving the Way info and form.pdf](#).

Contact Rhonda Caviedes at rcaviedes@bradleyarant.com for additional information. Nomination materials must be postmarked no later than January 30, 2009 and should be mailed to: Rhonda Caviedes, Bradley, Arant, Rose & White, LLP, One Federal Place, 1819 5th Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203

The Woman Lawyers Section of the Birmingham Bar Association established the Nina Miglionico "Paving the Way" Leadership Award to recognize and honor lawyers who have actively paved the way to success and advancement for women lawyers. "Miss Nina," as she is affectionately known to the Birmingham community, exemplifies a life devoted to the public good, as on the state's first women lawyers to engage in private practice in 1936, as the first female elected to the Birmingham City Council in 1963, and as an altruistic supporter of her church, community, and nation throughout her decades of service. From her beginning in a family of Italian immigrants, her short stature belies her tall standing as a role model and mentor to women lawyers in Alabama and the United States.

Recipients of the Award meet the following criteria:

1. The nominee is an individual lawyer who has achieved professional excellence, and
2. Assisted women lawyers to achieve their potential through mentoring, or
3. Inspired women lawyers to achieve their potential by providing a professional role model, or
4. Provided opportunities that paved the way for advancement of the status of women lawyers.

Pin Stripes and Pearls 2:

"Navigating Gender and Generational Differences in the Workplace"

Thursday, February 5, 2009 11:00 am – 12:15 pm

Cumberland Law School - Great Room, 800 Lakeshore Drive, Birmingham, AL 35229

Scheduled Panelists:

Honorable Karon O. Bowdre, U.S. District Court Judge

Linda D. Fenty, Ed.D., Global Insights, Inc.

Carolyn Lam, Associate – John D. Saxon, PC

Sabrina Andry Simon

Latanishia D. Watters, Member – Haskell Slaughter

For Additional Information Please Contact:

Khristi Doss Driver, 251-1000

Delores Simmons Owens, 278-1858

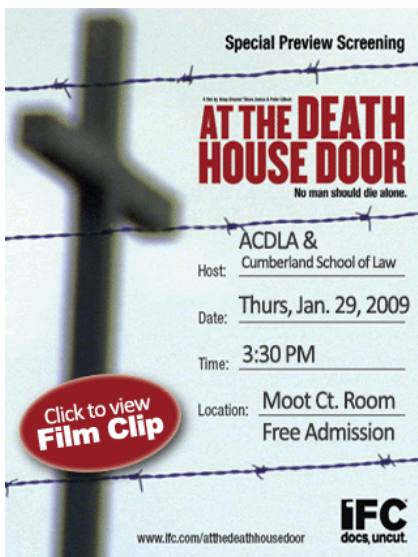
Anne L. Marovich, Assoc. Director Career Services, 726-2797

[pinstripesandpearlsflyer.pdf](#)

2009 Bunny Bag Wine Tasting is set for Thursday February 26, 2009 at Village Wine Market.

The Women Lawyers Section of the Birmingham Bar and the Birmingham Bar Foundation have again joined forces to purchase Bunny Bags for children of domestic violence. The bags were designed by the American Bar Association and contain items of information and comfort for children who are victims of domestic violence. Plan now to raise awareness and funds for the project by attending the **Bunny Bag Wine Tasting on Thursday, February 26, 2009 at Village Wine Market from 5:30 –7:30 p.m.** The bags have been purchased by the Women Lawyers and the Bar Foundation and distributed through the Bessemer Domestic Violence Court and the Birmingham YWCA since 2005. More bags are now needed, so please mark your calendar for the Wine Tasting fundraiser on February 26th. Tickets are \$20 per person cash or check payable at the door. Sponsorships are \$250 and include admission for eight (8) and special recognition. Please contact the Bar Foundation at (205) 251-2231 or bbfound@bellsouth.net or Leatha Gilbert at (205) 870-5500 for more information.

Reminders for Non-Section Activities and Events:



Special Preview Screening

AT THE DEATH HOUSE DOOR
No man should die alone.

Host: ACDLA & Cumberland School of Law

Date: Thurs, Jan. 29, 2009

Time: 3:30 PM

Location: Moot Ct. Room
Free Admission

Click to view Film Clip

www.ifc.com/atthedeathhousedoor

IFC docs, uncut.

Last semester, Cumberland hosted Attorney General Troy King as he presented his views on Alabama's Death Penalty. The school invites everyone to come together for a free preview screening of **"At the Death House Door"** in the Moot Court Room to continue the dialogue. **Show time is Thursday, January 29 at 3:30 PM.**



The film is a personal and intimate look at the death penalty in Texas through the eyes of Pastor Carroll Pickett who served 16 years as death house chaplain at the infamous "Walls" prison in Huntsville, Texas. There will be a discussion following the film. Award-winning directors Steve James (Hoop Dreams) and Peter Gilbert (Vietnam:

Long Time Coming) worked on this film and it was the winner of the Inspiration Award at the Full Frame Documentary Film Festival and Best Documentary Feature at the Atlanta Film Festival.

This event occurs in conjunction with the **Alabama Criminal Defense Lawyers Association** conference where Rev. Pickett is the Keynote speaker, **"Loosening the Death Belt XIII: Tightening the Defense – One Life at a Time"** Friday, **January 30** and Saturday, **January 31, 2009** at the DoubleTree Hotel 808 So. 20th Street Birmingham, AL. The conference is Co-sponsored by Cumberland School of Law, The University of Alabama School of Law and the ABA Death Penalty Representation Project. Speakers include: Richard Keith, President, ACDLA, Attorney, Montgomery, AL - Jonathan Lyon, Attorney, Chicago, IL - Keynote Speaker: Rev. Carroll Pickett – 16 Year Chaplain, Texas Death House - Janice Ophoven, M.D. Pediatric Forensic Services, Woodbury, MN - Cyndy Short, Attorney, St. Louis, MO - Russell Stetler, Federal Public Defender, Oakland, CA - John Mays, Attorney, Decatur, AL - Mike Blalock, Attorney, Birmingham, Richard Keith & Joe Van Heest, - Attorneys, Montgomery - J. Vincent Aprile, II, Attorney, Louisville, Kentucky - John Lentine, Attorney, Birmingham, AL - Derrick Drennan, Attorney.

12.0 hours' credit with 1.0 for Ethics.

[2009-DeathPenaltyBrochure.pdf](#)

Southern Literary Trail

THE SOUTHERN LITERARY TRAIL is a collaboration of eighteen southern towns from Natchez to Savannah that celebrate internationally renowned writers and playwrights of the twentieth century who were inspired by their communities. In March 2009, every Trail community will present plays, movies, tours and discussion panels that explore the masterworks of Southern literature and honor their authors. A tri-state festival of American literary and dramatic arts will be a first for the nation. Festival organizers in Alabama, Mississippi and Georgia invite you to join an unforgettable experience. Browse the pages of the official Southern Literary Trail Scrapbook at www.southernliterarytrail.org, and begin to write your own journey to the mythic places and pathways of great American literature. The Southern Literary Trail is a year-round experience, but in March 2009, the Trail's organizers will sponsor a collaborative literary festival in its three member states: Alabama, Georgia and Mississippi. Trailfest 09 will be a first-in-the-nation celebration.



The calendar of events for Alabama is included as a link below. Call William Gantt, Alabama Project Director, The Southern Literary Trail, office: 205.297.8849 with questions. [calendar for alabama.pdf](#)

Work/Life Balance Survey – 21 questions.

Take the Anonymous Online Survey:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=n32DGLtWtnOfRbZZf79z0A_3d_3d

Preview or Print the Survey: [Preview of Survey Questions.pdf](#)

Contact: Shawna H. Smith - shawna09@gmail.com - 231 Hulsey Street Bessemer, Alabama 35022-3880
Phone: 205-9078290

Shawna Smith, a 3L at Cumberland School of Law, came up with the idea of the survey after reading several publications that addressed the issue of work/life balance and reviewing statistics about the high attrition rate of female attorneys. In 2007, Working Mother magazine had an extensive article on its survey of the top 50 law firms and specifically addressed work/life balance. Because not one of the top 50 firms was in Birmingham, Shawna wondered about the situation in Birmingham. Since she was unable to find any information that adequately addressed this issue, she decided to work on it herself.

Shawna found it interesting that in law school 50% or more of each class consists of female students, but as they enter the working world the number drops dramatically. She hopes that this survey will give some insight as to what female attorneys in Birmingham are experiencing in their own work life. Shawna notes that these issues are on the minds of both male and female students in law school today. She wonders if Birmingham is doing well, average, or poorly in response to this issue. Shawna states that she hopes that WLS members complete the survey to help ensure that it provides an accurate picture of the status of women lawyers in Birmingham.

The **Women in Law** organization at Cumberland is seeking mentors for the Spring term. If you are willing to mentor a young female attorney, please send an email to us with your name and contact information. You will then be contacted via e-mail and asked to fill out a brief questionnaire about your background, interests and area of practice. This information will be used to pair you with a Cumberland law student. The time commitment is flexible and will be determined by you and the law student with whom you are paired. Please consider volunteering to help with this very worthwhile project. If you have any questions, please contact Sabrina Simon at sabrina.a.simon@gmail.com. You may also email her directly and let her know if you are interested in the program.

First Light - www.firstlightshelter.org

First Light is a Center for Homeless Women and Children located in the heart of downtown Birmingham. It offers the only 24-hour emergency shelter for homeless women and homeless women with children in the area. In addition to meeting the basic needs of guests, First Light offers: Individualized case management; A variety of activities, both fun and informational; Three permanent housing programs, and Most of all, a place of acceptance where guests can begin to regain dignity, hope and independence. 2230 Fourth Avenue North • Birmingham, AL • 35203 • P. 205.323.4277 • F. 205.323.8362. There are so many ways for you to get involved at First Light. Our volunteer base includes people from all walks of life and all levels of life experience. From the 11-year-old who donates her birthday money every other year to the churches who serve dinner a week at a time to the rotary club who contributed new lockers and seat cushions to the 4-H Club that renovated the courtyard, adding a new picnic table... there's a full spectrum of opportunities. It's up to you. Please contact volunteer Shannon Horsley at 323-4277. Serving on the Board of Directors. The board serves in an advisory capacity to the Executive Director and devotes much of its effort throughout the year to the Gala, our annual fundraiser. These individuals can come from any field and may simply wish to serve based on their personal commitment toward ending homelessness. If you are interested in serving on First Light's Board of Directors, please contact Ruth Crosby at ruth.crosby@firstlightshelter.org. Bringing and serving breakfast or dinner. Volunteers bring and serve breakfast or dinner for 60 women on a daily basis. Breakfast is served from 6:30-7:30am Monday-Friday and from 7:30-8:30am on Saturday and Sunday. Dinner is served at 6:30pm every night. First Light has a fully-stocked commercial kitchen available for groups wishing to prepare the meal in-house. Staying overnight. Every night, at least one volunteer is scheduled to arrive at 7pm and hand out necessary supplies to the women in the emergency shelter. Overnight volunteers are provided with a private sleeping space and bathroom. This tends to be a rewarding experience because it affords the opportunity to have contact with the guests on a more personal and meaningful level. If you are interested in volunteering overnight, please click here and read a few more details about this very special volunteer opportunity. Because this necessarily involves a commitment to confidentiality, there are guidelines. Offering services or activities for our guests. As a center providing services to homeless women and children, we attempt to provide new and stimulating experiences to our guests. These could include: Bible Studies in our chapel; arts and crafts; free attendance at plays, concerts and other community events; a spa day including manicures, facials and massages; AA and NA meetings; and holiday parties, to name a few. This is where you get to be creative! Contact Shannon Horsley at shannon.horsley@firstlightshelter.org if you are interested in brainstorming this volunteer opportunity. If you or your company could provide a service that benefits the good work done here, not necessarily with direct contact with the women, please let us know by contacting Deborah Everson at deborah.everson@firstlightshelter.org

Engaging Business: Addressing Child Labor



February 25, 2009 - Hosted by The Coca-Cola Company
Atlanta
[Addressing Child Labor Agenda.pdf](#)



UNITED STATES COUNCIL FOR
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

Please join the US Council for International Business at this international business forum on engaging business to address child labor, organized by USCIB in partnership with the

U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the International Organization of Employers and the International Labor Organization. Following the successful model of last February's forum on forced labor (which resulted in a Business Alliance on Forced Labor), this one-day meeting will review the growing business risks resulting from child labor in supply chains, assess opportunities for proactive business engagement, and help to develop programs that the ILO and other partners can carry forward. This meeting will also provide impetus to a more effective response by business to the problem of child labor. Child labor experts from the ILO, business leaders and other key actors will share concrete experiences dealing with child labor from the local to the global levels. There is no charge to participate in the forum, but registration is required in advance. Please contact Jessica Berti (jberti@uscib.org) for a registration form due Monday, February 23. For more information, please contact Adam Greene (212-703-5056, agreene@uscib.org).

The Birmingham International Center Presents: The Ties that Bind – International Women's Day Conference - March 5, 2009 at the Harbert Plaza
Contact person: Kellye Copas, Development Director, Birmingham International Center - Phone: 205-252-7652 - kcopas@bic-al.org
[Announcement of International Women's Day Conference.pdf](#)

"Sharing Success" Women's Seminar

Join the hundreds of women who are headed to Hollywood, CA for the DRI "Sharing Success" Women's Seminar! The planning committee has been working very hard to make this year's program even better than last year's - although it's a high standard to meet! The seminar will take place in beautiful Santa Monica, CA on March 5 and 6, 2009 at the Loews Hotel - a fabulous hotel in an amazing California city. This year's program is phenomenal and includes: A special marketing break-out session for lawyers practicing less than 10 years (space is limited so sign up soon!). How to start (or improve) a women's initiative in your firm. Trial techniques, such as dealing with difficult witnesses, cross-examining expert witnesses and dealing with gender issues in the courtroom. Communication strategies specially designed for women litigators. Navigating today's law firm politics. Dealing with the media in high-profile litigation. How to have a meaningful, productive career and a happy, well-balanced life. Presentations from in-house counsel, including Wyeth, Kellogg Company and McDonald's Corporation. Make plans to stay for the post-seminar fun as well. We've planned some amazing post-seminar networking activities including a Tour of Stars Homes, a Hollywood shopping trip, a spa outing fit for the stars and more. We are also planning some great networking dinners during and after the seminar (including dinner on Friday night at the famous Ivey Restaurant, where you're sure to see a few movie stars!). Last year 250 women from across the country came to this seminar, and we're anticipating even more attending this year. You can register online at <http://www.dri.org/open/SeminarDetail.aspx?eventCode=20090208>. And don't forget, there are some

discounts available: Young Lawyers (practicing less than 5 years) who are not members of DRI get a free seminar registration "certificate" when they join DRI. So, if you are (or know) a Young Lawyer, join DRI and use the free seminar registration certificate for the Women's Seminar. (The fee for joining DRI as a Young Lawyer is only \$130!) The first and second registrations from the same firm or company are subject to the standard registration fees. However, the registration fee for additional registrants from the same firm or company is \$50 off the member rate, regardless of membership status. All registrations must be received at the same time to receive the discount. For more information about the hotel, click on the link below: <http://www.loewshotels.com/en/Hotels/Santa-Monica-Beach-Hotel/Overview.aspx> For information on the city of Santa Monica , click on the link below: <http://www.santamonica.com>. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call/email Lana Alcorn Olson at (205) 581-1514 or lolson@lightfootlaw.com.

Articles

The Revised Birmingham Differential Case Management Plan and the Revised Standard Scheduling Order

by J. SCOTT VOWELL, PRESIDING CIRCUIT JUDGE
JANUARY 2009

[DCMP_09_10_2008.pdf](#)
[Scheduling Order word.pdf](#)

The Civil Division of the Circuit Court, Birmingham, has managed its docket since 1990, under a case management system known as the Birmingham Differential Case Management Plan (the Plan). We have recently made significant revisions to the Plan and this article is written to inform the Bar about the changes. In 1989, Chief Justice Sonny Hornsby appointed a committee of leading Birmingham judges, lawyers and administrators to address the serious backlog of civil cases in the Birmingham Division. Their solution was the adoption of the Plan, which became effective for all CV cases on October 1, 1990. Prior to the adoption of the Plan, a Master Calendar System was used. Under that system, CV cases were not assigned to a specific judge until the case was sent out for trial. Pre-trial motions in all cases were heard by the Presiding Judge at a general motion docket. A civil case was not set for trial until the parties filed a Certificate of Readiness. As a result, some cases sat on the pending docket with no action for lengthy periods of time. If a case was set for trial, the setting did not reflect the age of the case, its complexity or its management needs. The result of that system was that there was little or no judicial involvement in the management of a case until the case was called for trial. Under the adopted Plan, as soon as a case is commenced by filing the complaint with the Circuit Clerk, it is randomly assigned to a Circuit Judge, and that Judge is responsible for the management of the case until its final disposition. The Court intervenes in the case early, as soon as all parties have responded to the complaint. The judge assigns the case to an appropriate "track" and an early Status Conference is conducted. At the initial Status Conference, after an evaluation by judge and counsel of the complexity of the case, an appropriate Scheduling Order is entered in each case and this Order controls the management of the case until final judgment. The Scheduling Order usually assigns the case a trial date and the judges have established a firm and consistent policy for minimizing continuances. The Plan recognizes that all civil cases are not alike. The time for trial preparation, the amount and type of court intervention, and the appropriate trial setting, must vary from case to case. We have operated under the Plan for 18 years and it has succeeded beyond expectation. On October 1, 1990, there were 13,806 pending CV cases in Birmingham and the average number of days from filing to disposition was 678.48 days. On October 1, 2008, there were 7,038 pending CV cases and the average number of days from filing to disposition has been cut in half, to 328.89 days. There have been many changes in the practice of law since 1990, but our Plan has not been modified since it was instituted. One of the major changes in the system has been the conversion to electronic filing. This year is only our second year of accepting electronically filed complaints and over half of our new cases filed in 2008 have been filed electronically. To deal with these and other changes, last year I named a new Committee to study the Plan and to propose needed revisions. We have had input from the Bench

and the Bar and the Birmingham Bar Association's Civil Procedures Committee has been especially helpful. The revisions have been unanimously approved by the Circuit Judges in the Birmingham Civil Division. The fundamentals of the Plan are unchanged, but it has been made more relevant to current litigation practice. In an effort to achieve consistency among our eleven civil judges, about five years ago the Judges in the Civil Division agreed to use a Standard Scheduling Order. We were able to craft an Order which was acceptable to everyone and the use of a uniform order has been a welcomed change. It avoids the traps for lawyers when different judges establish slightly different technical filing requirements. In conjunction with the revision of the Plan, another committee was appointed to review and revise the Standard Scheduling Order. The revisions to the Order, with appendices, have also been unanimously approved by the Circuit Judges and are now in use. Both the Revised Birmingham Differential Case Management Plan and the Revised Standard Scheduling Order are attached hereto. They are also available at the Birmingham Bar and the Tenth Judicial Circuit Websites: www.birminghambar.org and <http://10jc.alacourt.gov>. <http://www.bhambar.org><http://www.10cir.gov>. Please carefully study these important documents and circulate them among your colleagues. We will continue to review the Plan and solicit your suggestions for further improvements. We believe that adherence to the Revised Birmingham Differential Case Management Plan and the Revised Uniform Scheduling Order will continue to improve the services provided to the people of Alabama by your Judiciary.

For further information contact:

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Room 370

Birmingham, Alabama 35203

(205) 325-5200

jonathan.holt@alacourt.gov

Keeping Kids Active in the Winter Months

Look for an indoor facility. There are great places, like the YMCA, who have year-round facilities such as indoor pools, basketball courts or skating rinks. Go to their website to locate one near you. Also look for gymnastics places that have free play time.



Dance your heart out! Crank up the tunes or grab your musical instruments, even if it's a harmonica or recorder, but just something to provide a little sound to get you motivated to dance around the house. You can pick a favorite song and sing it together and act it out!

Don't be afraid to go outside! Even if it's cold or snowy, get bundled up and go outside to play in the winter wonderland of your backyard or park. Just walking around the block for some fresh air is enough to drive away the crankies in any child.

Keep it clean. You know you have chores to do around the house, isn't this a good time to enlist the help of your kids? You can give them new responsibilities like making their beds, taking out the garbage, picking up their toys, etc and offer them a small reward for being such good helpers.

Don't forget the library. Many libraries have children's rooms where your kids could sit and read or check out all of the kids only books. It's a great stop on a weekend day and it's free!

Do the Zoo. Most zoos are open in the winter, even if in a limited way. It's a great place to go to show kids how life changes during the various seasons.

Group lessons. See what your town or your child's school is offering in terms of extra-curricular activities and sign your kids up for something new and different. Whether it's a craft class, drama or one that requires physical exertion, it'll give your child a chance to meet new friends learn something and if nothing else, get out of the house and run around for a bit!

Little chefs. Cooking and baking can be fun even with little ones. Check our Kids channel and Yum-o! website for more tips and recipes.

Dress up! Old clothes and jewelry should never be thrown away! Instead, keep this stuff organized in a box and your kids will love playing dress up with all the various fun and mismatched grown-up wares. You can also pick up a few extra dress up props at garage sales or dollar store-things like tiaras and boas will add a whole new element of glamour to the outfits!

Hair salon. This may only make sense for girls, but if you've got time on your hands, then open a mini salon and seize the moments to curl, straighten, pin up and spray. You will never go through this much effort on a school day, so why not have some fun now?

These are just some ideas we recommend trying while the cold weather persists. Most important is to remember that it is not what you do with your kids, it's that you spend time together, even if you just sit around acting silly and building a pillow fort or drawing with chalk. They will enjoy and remember the bonding experience more than anything else!

Sharpening Your Skills: Career & Life Balance



Feeling Stuck? Getting Past Impasse - Feeling "stuck," as psychologically painful as it is, is the first step to awareness of new opportunities in career and in life, says Harvard Business School's Timothy Butler. In this Q&A and excerpt from his book, *Getting Unstuck*, he explains six steps for getting from here to there. Key concepts include: A psychological impasse is developmentally necessary for human beings. Although impasse is usually first expressed as a failure, it is a requirement for individuals to change their way of thinking about themselves and their role in the world. There is a six-phase plan for recognizing and overcoming impasse, starting with feeling stuck and ending with finally taking action. Each phase has its predictable challenges, but some people find one phase more difficult than another.

Most people at one time or another feel as if they are just spinning their wheels, unable to gain traction either in career or in life. This feeling of being stuck in one place, while troubling, is part of a necessary crisis leading to personal growth, says Dr. Timothy Butler, Senior Fellow and Director of Career Development Programs at Harvard Business School. "Without it we cannot grow, change, and—eventually—live more fully in a larger world," Butler writes in his new book, *Getting Unstuck: How Dead Ends Become New Paths* (Harvard Business School Press). Butler, a psychologist, psychotherapist, and career development counselor for over 25 years, is also a researcher on career decision making generally and the relationship between personality structure and work satisfaction in particular. He met recently with *HBS Working Knowledge* to discuss how commonly business professionals may be confronted with a sense of psychological impasse and how they can free themselves.

Martha Lagace: What sorts of thoughts, feelings, and images do people experience when they face an impasse?

Timothy Butler: First, let's distinguish between day-to-day frustrations and the experience of being at an impasse. The impasse experience has features that are common to all of us, and in time each of us has a unique experience of impasse. For most people the recognition that we're at an impasse,

whether it's a career situation or a broader life situation, creeps up rather than presents itself suddenly. For most people it comes through feelings first: of being frustrated, stuck, maybe even feeling a significant down mood, maybe even shading toward feeling depressed. And along with that, typically, is a self-attribution: feeling that there is something wrong with us and feeling stuck. Impasse means that we need to change our whole approach to a problem. Thoughts are always part and parcel of the feeling experience: thoughts of "I'm not doing something correctly, I'm not succeeding, I'm not fulfilling my potential. I'm not doing my job to my utmost. I can't see what the next challenge is going to be and I can't get motivated about it."

Q: Are there particular experiences that lead to an impasse?

A: No. Our lives are unique. We all experience impasse, and we will experience impasse many times in our lives. Why? One of the things I describe in the book is the fact that impasse is developmentally necessary. The meaning of an impasse, although it's usually first expressed as a failure or in an internalized notion of inadequacy, is a request for us to change our way of thinking about ourselves and our place in the world. At impasse our model—our cognitive map of life and of the way we're going to fit into it—is no longer working. We all carry a representation of the world, our work, how we do our work, and how we fit in and where we're going; and that map is always inadequate in a number of ways. It always falls short of representing dynamic, ever-changing reality. Just continuing with our usual approaches to problem-solving will not help us break through. Impasse means that we need to change our whole approach to the problem. We need to change our understanding of the problem. We have to change our repertoire of ways in which we approach life challenges. As to what sorts of experiences lead to impasse, they could be anything: perhaps a sudden, unanticipated change at work—which happens all the time. The norm is change. There is much talk about change management, but the fact of the matter is, the "steady state" involves change as well. We may learn that someone—our boss, our boss's boss, or a key person—is leaving. He or she won't be here 4 weeks from now. The events that flow from a simple change such as this can be complex. Perhaps this event prompts a reorganization and suddenly we're feeling and thinking about our job in a whole different way. Or maybe the trigger is an event in our personal life. The break-up of a relationship or the death of a parent. The types of experience that bring on impasse are myriad, and we often don't realize how much particular life events will mean to us. When loss or change brings us to impasse because we feel that we are at a dead end, we have to look at life anew because our old ways aren't working. If we continue to try to use the old ways it will just mean more pain.

Q: Do you think business people in particular find the experience of impasse especially challenging, given their career pressures?

A: Impasse is a familiar experience for them. Business professionals, particularly if they are working in dynamic markets, will be, perhaps at a rate more frequent than most people, exposed to situations where their jobs are redefined. What is being asked of them changes in very significant ways in a relatively short time. I think that every business professional and executive has a model of "what's next." If you asked most executives what's going to happen over the next 12 or even 18 months, what they will be doing, what their major responsibilities will be, they would have the answer in their back pocket: "This is what I need to accomplish, this is where I'll be, I expect things to go in this direction, and these are the goals I'm driving toward." Well, that certainty can change radically on fairly short notice. When it does, the first response is to just muscle through. Keep on pushing and throw more resources at it. But often what a clear impasse signifies is that you need to stop and realize that your model does not capture the reality of your business right now and the reality of your position within your organization.

Q: What are the steps to recognizing and overcoming impasse?

A: In my book I write about 6 phases in the impasse process. The process is not meant to be rigidly linear because obviously there's back and forth between any 2 of these phases or even between more than 2 of them at a time. But generally there's a movement and a pattern that the impasse follows, and it's helpful sometimes to break things down. The first phase is the arrival of a crisis. Each person's first

response is to keep on plugging. Each impasse is an opportunity to look a little deeper and understand better what works for us. Phase 2 is a deepening of the crisis. We realize that our old ways are not working. It's not a matter of staying up late, working harder, and getting in earlier. Emotionally there's the feeling of being stuck. And then some predictable things happen in the second phase: There is the return of old issues. We hit an impasse and suddenly old doubts emerge. "You never really were top at that and now it's really showing up." If it's a personal situation it may be old feelings of anger, shame, self-doubt. It's not just a career skills aspect; when I talk about the return of old issues, I mean issues that relate to any aspect of our lives. It's as if the impasse were made to break down our defenses. In particular, the inner critic becomes louder and more powerful during this second phase. The inner critic is that internal naysayer that Freud called the superego; but it wasn't a new concept, it's been around as long as humanity has. In *Getting Unstuck* I discuss some strategies for dealing with the inner critic. The third phase is when we finally realize that our old model isn't working. We begin to face the situation with new eyes and new ears, ask what is happening, and attend to our direct, raw experience. In the fourth phase we begin to listen better and to be open to a new type of information. We are pushed to the edge of our concrete, more purely analytic ways of understanding, and we begin to appreciate complexity and metaphor in underlying themes. We are forced to go deeper. In *Getting Unstuck* I have a number of exercises that are designed to enable the reader to shift to this more metaphorical way of apprehending life. One exercise is called the 100 Jobs exercise. It has nothing to do with jobs. It's a way of helping a person identify the core themes, dynamic tensions, and images that are trying to emerge at this particular moment in his or her life. Another exercise called Image Gathering is a guided exercise by me on the Web site associated with the book. The fifth phase of the impasse process is a deepening of insight into the patterns of the self. This phase is not discreet; it happens over time. There are patterns to the self: patterns to the things we like about the world, the things we value, the types of people we tend to enjoy, the types we tend not to enjoy, the types of activities that tend to be more meaningful, the types of environments that are more pleasant and rewarding. As we grow older we have the possibility of gaining insight into our own patterns. Each impasse is an opportunity to look a little deeper and understand better what works for us. The more we know ourselves, the less we are thrown by the *next* impasse. In the book there are a few chapters devoted to models of patterns of the self. I write about deeply embedded life interests and understanding how they get expressed in work, and how we learn which interests are most meaningful for us and what business or organizational roles will allow us to express them. I write about social motivators, power, achievement, and affiliation, borrowing on the work of Henry Murray and David McClelland. The sixth and final phase requires taking action. The impasse developmental experience does not become realized until we actually do something to seal the deal, if you will. We buy those art supplies and set up the art studio in our home. Or we schedule that meeting that we've been thinking about for 2 years but have never done. We do something that shows the world and ourselves that we've gone through the impasse, it's been a real experience, and now we can act in the world based on what we've learned.

Q: Of these 6 steps, which are particularly difficult to deal with?

A: Each stage has its predictable challenges, but some people find one stage more difficult than another. The arrival of the crisis for some people leads to panic. For many people, phase 2 is the toughest: this return of the old issues and the inner critic. "I thought I'd worked through this problem; why do I still feel so angry at this person, so inadequate around this issue?" For some, phase 3 is most difficult, admitting, "I don't know, I've got to start from square one." Some people just "get" phase 4, perhaps because it calls for a more intuitive and imaginative way of addressing a problem, but those who are less intuitive have to work harder. For phase 5, some people are more psychologically minded than others and when asked "Tell me about yourself" can express a rich text where others struggle. In phase 6 some people find that actually taking action is what stops them. They can do all the analysis and introspection, but when it comes time to stop and "do it"—ask for the promotion, buy the house or not—that is terribly difficult.

Q: What awaits us on the other side of an impasse?

A: The unknown. That's the difficulty of impasse: You don't know. The whole basis of an impasse is that you *thought* you knew what was going to happen next, but you didn't. What awaits us is how our life is going to open up next. It's pretty scary and also pretty exciting. The big message from an impasse is that you don't know what awaits you. But not knowing is not the bad thing that you think it is. Excerpt from *Getting Unstuck: How Dead Ends Become New Paths*, by Timothy Butler. **New Territory** - "How can I tell when I am at an impasse?" I am often asked. At other times, people tell me a story about being stuck and say, "Yes, that happened to me once." In their attempts to locate impasse at a particular moment, these people miss an important point. When we describe impasse, we tell a story about when we "hit the wall" and what we had to do to get beyond it. Each story, including the stories in this book, seems to have a beginning, a middle, and an end. But this is mostly an illusion. An impasse experience can unfold over a year or within twenty-four hours. Impasse is a psychological process, outside of time and space. It is another word for a border that is always there, beckoning. Our work at impasse helps us cross that border and live in a new territory. In this sense, impasse is the frontier of what needs to happen next for us if we are to live life as openly as possible. If we lived completely openly, we would probably not experience impasse, because we would face each moment without any evasions, excuses, or attachments to old habits. Few of us are capable of living continually in such a fashion, however, so we experience "impasse crises" like the ones described in this book. An impasse crisis happens when we have been, for some time, avoiding the work of living fully at our border. We are missing something essential in our lives, and it is as if the impasse crisis is saying, "Enough! No more evasion! You can no longer avoid this, you must deal with it now or these symptoms will persist and grow more intense." If we could live all the time at the border, there would be no need for this message. **Living at the border** - What would it be like to *live* at the border? What would it be like to be open fully to the energies and possibilities that are emerging, regardless of their threat to habit, comfort, and stereotyped expectations? The lives of artists give us a glimpse of the answer to this question. In one sense, their very work is to make their experience at impasse visible, or audible, to others. Their lives often become metaphors for what experience at the edge of impasse would be like. Martin Scorsese's film *No Direction Home* focuses on just five years in the life of Bob Dylan, 1961 to 1966. For Dylan, these were years of volcanic creativity. Song after startling song emerged as he changed musical genres and produced music of astounding variety and compelling originality. His growing audience grew confused, even angry, at his shifting identity. But no amount of audience hostility, media criticism, or fatigue from concerts stops him. He is in the flow. This is the image of a person living continually at the edge, with no fear of the consequences. Similarly, D.H. Lawrence lived a life of intense devotion to beauty, art, and the world of relationship throughout his thirties and early forties (he died at forty-four). He believed that a person's greatest art was his life and held that the manner in which he crafted his life was far more important than the craft, or outcome, of his writing. Lawrence had some public recognition in his last years, but for the most part he devoted those years to what he called a "savage pilgrimage" in search of beauty in a "sense of place" and of deeper companionship with the men and women around him. His love of song, the earth, and the sensual world was his great "accomplishment." He seemed to live continually at the border. Although they are able to tell us about it, life at the border is not reserved for artists. It is, for each of us, the only way forward. All the world religions offer some variation on Lawrence's notion of life as pilgrimage. In Judaism, the exodus from the captivity of the spirit to new life is a central theme. In Christianity, the Gospel tells us that the Son of Man "has no place to rest His head." In Islam, the hajj is a constant pilgrimage toward the Divine, as much as it is a journey to Mecca. The message of the major faiths is not, at its heart, a measure of dogmatic certainties, but of a journey forward that breaks through times of trial along the way. This book has concerned itself with the way we might begin the journey anew when we accept the way we are stuck and do the work of disciplined observation and imagination. The experience at impasse is both tough and exciting. It is like a cold autumn wind that carries the thrill of color and change. Impasse invites us to shed our fears and move to the border of what is actually presenting itself to us, right now. This returning offers us a bargain, an opportunity to exchange certainty for vulnerability, sentimentality for depth of feeling, and the comfort of the familiar for the energy of a world that, as hard and exciting as it may be, is always beckoning. Excerpted by permission of Harvard Business School Press from *Getting Unstuck: How Dead Ends Become New Paths*, by Timothy Butler. Copyright 2007 Timothy Butler; all rights reserved. To order, please call (800) 988-0886 or purchase online: http://www.hbsp.harvard.edu/b01/en/common/item_detail.jhtml?id=2254. Copyright © 2009 President and Fellows of Harvard College

Recipes

RedHot Buffalo Chicken Dip



1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
1/2 cup blue cheese salad dressing or ranch salad dressing
1/2 cup any flavor Frank's® RedHot® sauce
1/2 cup crumbled blue cheese or shredded mozzarella cheese
2 cans (9.75 ounces each) Swanson® Premium Chunk Chicken Breast in Water
Celery and carrot sticks or your favorite crackers

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Stir cream cheese in a 9-inch deep dish pie plate with a fork until smooth. Stir in the dressing, pepper sauce and blue cheese. Stir in chicken. Bake for 20 minutes or until the chicken mixture is bubbling. Stir before serving. Serve with veggies and crackers for dipping.

Turkey Swiss French Toast

2 thick slices (about an inch and a half) egg bread, such as Challah bread
2 slices deli roast turkey
2 slices Swiss cheese
1 egg, lightly beaten
A splash milk
2 tablespoons butter
Real maple syrup, for drizzling

Preparation

Fold the slices of cheese in half and then in half again and wrap each one in a slice of turkey. With a paring knife, make slice in the top of each slice of bread and cut about 3/4 of the way through the slice to make a pocket. Stuff one of the Swiss-turkey bundles inside each pocket. Place a medium-size nonstick skillet over medium heat and melt the butter. Combine the beaten egg in a shallow bowl or dish with the milk. Add the stuffed bread to the egg mixture and coat both sides in the egg. Place the egg-coated bread in the skillet and cook on both sides until golden brown. Serve with a little drizzle of maple syrup on the top or a small bowl of syrup alongside for dipping, if desired.

Sloppy Chipotle Joes

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 1/2 pounds ground sirloin
1 large onion, finely chopped
1 red bell pepper, finely chopped
3 garlic cloves, grated or finely chopped
1 chipotle pepper in adobo, chopped, plus 1 tablespoon of the sauce
2 tablespoons brown sugar
2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
1 cup tomato sauce
Salt and pepper, to taste
4 Kaiser rolls, split

Place a large skillet over medium-high heat and spread the oil. Once hot, add the ground sirloin and cook for about 4-5 minutes, breaking it up with a potato masher or the back of a spoon as it browns. Add the onion, red bell pepper, garlic, chipotle pepper and sauce and cook, stirring every now and then, for 3-4 minutes, until the onions and peppers start to get a little tender. In a small mixing bowl, combine the brown sugar, Worcestershire sauce and tomato sauce. Add the sauce to the skillet and season everything with a little salt and pepper, to taste. Bring up to a bubble and simmer until nice and thick, about 3-4 minutes. To serve, divide the mixture between the split Kaiser rolls.

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2009 Officers

Chair - Pam Blalock

Chair - Elect Rhonda Caviedes

Immediate Past Chair – Leatha Gilbert

Secretary - Crystal McMeekin

Treasurer - Sidney Hoover

Corresponding Secretary - Ashley Hattaway

Historian - Frances King Quick

NCWBA Representative - Pat Moore

Liaison with Alabama State Bar Women's Section - Sherrie L. Phillips

Executive Board

Board Term Expires in 2009

Deane Corliss, Gail Barber, Katy Willis, Candi Peeples, Sidney Hoover, Shirley McCarty

Board Term Expires in 2010

LaBella Alvis, Mary Lynn Bates, Honora Gathings, Alicia Haynes, Hon. Virginia Vinson

Board Term Expires in 2011

Teresa Minor, Hon. Theresa Pulliam, Monica Graveline, Brendette Brown Green, Sabrina Simon

2009 Committee Chair and Co-Chair Assignments:**Membership**

(Assists in updating membership databases and organizes a project or event that will increase membership and improve retention.)

Tameka Wren, Chair

Susan Nettles, Co-Chair

Newsletter and Public Relations

(Publishes the Notitia in collaboration with other Committees and the BBA, liaison with the Birmingham Bar Journal, the Alabama Lawyer and local media outlets.)

Rebecca Amthor, Chair

V. Michelle Obradovic, Co-Chair

Social and Entertainment

(Plans Annual Meeting, another large event and several social gatherings.)

Janine Smith, Chair

Christi Graham, Co-Chair

Programs

(Plans a large program and special programs in addition to the Annual Meeting.)

April Rogers, Chair

Lindsay Reese, Co-Chair

Projects

(Identifies projects benefiting the YWCA and organizes events benefiting other non-profits and coordinates charitable donations.)

Shayana Boyd Davis, Chair

Desiree Alexander, Co-Chair

Service Award

(Coordinates Law School Scholarships.)

Marcie Braswell, Chair

Katie Suttle Weinert, Co-Chair

2009 Task Force Chair and Co-Chair Assignments:**Pinstripes and Pearls**

(panel discussion)

Delores Owens, Chair

Khristi Driver, Co-Chair

Leadership Development

(assist section members in becoming leaders)

Carolyn Lam, Chair

Haley Andrews Cox, Co-Chair

Back Issues

January, February, March and April 2007 Editions of the Notitia: [2007 Notitia January through April Editions.pdf](#)

May 2007 Edition of the Notitia: [May 2007 Notitia.pdf](#)

June 2007 Edition of the Notitia: [June 2007 Edition of the Notitia.pdf](#)

July, August and September 2007 Editions of the Notitia: [July, August, September Editions.pdf](#)

October 2007 Edition of the Notitia: [October 2007 Edition of the Notitia.pdf](#)

November 2007 Edition of the Notitia: [November 2007 Edition of the Notitia.pdf](#)

December 2007 Edition of the Notitia: [December 2007 Edition of the Notitia.pdf](#)

January 2008 Edition of the Notitia: [January 2008 Edition of the Notitia.pdf](#)

February 2008 Edition of the Notitia: [February 2008 Edition of the Notitia.pdf](#)

March 2008 Edition of the Notitia: [March 2008 Edition of the Notitia.pdf](#)

April - May 2008 Editions of the Notitia: [April-May 2008 Edition of the Notitia.pdf](#)

June - July 2008 Editions of the Notitia: [June-July 2008 Edition of the Notitia.pdf](#)

August - September 2008 Editions of the Notitia: [August-September 2008 Edition of the Notitia.pdf](#)

October - November 2008 Editions of the Notitia: [Notitia - October - November 2008.pdf](#)

January - February 2009 Editions of the Notitia: [Notitia - January - February 2009.pdf](#)

ListServ

The Yahoo! listserv that is maintained by Candi Peeples. To join: (1) send an email to bba_women-subscribe@yahoogroups.com (That's bba "underscore" women "dash" subscribe @ yahoogroups.com); (2) when you receive an email back from Yahoo! asking you to confirm the fact that you want to be on the list serve, follow the directions in the email. To post messages to the Section, send an e-mail to bba_women@yahoogroups.com. Candi can be reached at 205-871-9550 or candi@shawanderson.com. Online help can be found at the following link: <http://help.yahoo.com/help/us/groups/>

What are the options for reading group messages in email? For each group you belong to, you have the option to control both the frequency of email message delivery and the format of messages:

Frequency Options

- Individual Emails. Messages are delivered one at a time to your email inbox. This is the best option if you want to keep up on the latest posts immediately. Email attachments, if included in a message and allowed by your moderator, will be sent directly to you.

- Daily Digest. Messages are delivered in batches of 25 or daily, whichever comes sooner. This is the best option if you want to receive fewer mail messages and don't need up-to-the minute posts in your inbox. Email attachments are not available in digests.
- Only Special Announcements. This means you will receive email messages only when the group moderator posts a "Special Announcement" message. This is a good option if you want to pass on day-to-day discussion for very busy groups but do want to receive important updates from the group moderator. Keep in mind that usage by each moderator will vary. (The moderator may choose to never use this feature, in which case you would never receive email messages, or may choose to use it frequently.)
- No Mail / Web Only. The best option to choose if you prefer to only read messages on the web. Also useful if you need to temporarily put message delivery on hold, for example while you are on vacation. However, keep in mind that (while rare) some groups do not enable the "message archive" feature and for these groups it is not possible to read messages on the web. It is a moderator decision on whether to enable the message archive feature.

Format Options

- Full Featured. Includes links giving you instant access to all group features (photos, calendar, profiles, polls, files, etc.), the ability to see all messages to a topic, and a "recent activity module" providing information on new activity in the group over the last seven days. Definitely the best choice for groups that use more than just the message features or groups where you want to take advantage of the message archive.
- Traditional. Emails are delivered "as is", without the addition of any links back to the group, except in the footer of the email. The right choice if your email client does not effectively support the "Full Featured" format.

To set any of these options, go to the "Edit Membership" page of your group: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/GROUPNAME/join> (where "GROUPNAME" is the name of your group). Message frequency options for groups can also be changes from the "Edit My Groups" page: <http://groups.yahoo.com/mygroups?o=2&edit=1>

Additional help can be found at: <http://help.yahoo.com/help/us/groups/messages/messages-01.html>

Guidelines for posting messages

The Women Lawyers Section wants the list-serve to be an active tool, however it is recognized that too much irrelevant traffic will defeat the purpose of the list-serve. The following are some guidelines to use in posting messages. These guidelines are not intended to scare anyone from posting messages or other valuable information. Rather, experiences with other list-serves suggest that guidelines will keep our list-serve running smoothly and effectively.

The following types of messages are NOT appropriate.

- 1) Marketing by list members or others.
- 2) Political announcements or petitions.
- 3) Political solicitation, including campaign materials.
- 4) Any other message not directly related to or of particular interest to section members . This category includes jokes (even funny ones), warnings about internet scams and viruses and chain messages.
- 5) Any kind of inflammatory, discriminatory or personal attacks.

Thank you for adhering to these guidelines!