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## Women Attorneys in Iowa: Nancy C. Johnson

*A Profile by Kathleen K. Law*

I recently had the pleasure of interviewing Nancy Johnson for this month's newsletter. Nancy and I met in the Fall of 2002 through Drake Law School's mentor program, where Nancy was assigned as my mentor. She took her mentoring role very seriously, meeting with me for lunch on several occasions, helping me to land my first real "legal job" and even provided me with samples of first year class outlines when I was stressing out before finals.

Nancy Johnson received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Howard Payne University in Brownwood, Texas, which is a small Baptist college of about 2000 students. Nancy enjoyed attending a smaller college, because the smaller atmosphere provided her with the opportunity to become a class officer, to serve on the school Senate and with other similar opportunities. Nancy received her JD from Texas Tech School of Law in Lubbock, Texas and an LLM in International Law from Georgetown University School of Law. She said that the best part of attending Georgetown was getting to spend a year in Germany in an exchange program established by a former professor who fled Nazi Germany during WWII and found a new life teaching at Georgetown.

At the beginning of Nancy's legal career, she enjoyed working for a number of years as a seasonal tax attorney while living in Northern Virginia. In this position, she worked with a number of foreign persons, such as International Red Cross and World Bank employees. Nancy has been an attorney with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) since 1981. Her position is categorized as that of a VA Staff Attorney "generalist." This means Nancy handles every type of legal matter for which a VA facility located in Iowa might need advice. These issues range from concerns relating to cemetery operations, issues involving the operation of outpatient and inpatient medical facilities (such as medical malpractice claims) and issues related to payment of government benefits (i.e. fraud, bankruptcy, child support withholding, and opinions as to the validity of common law marriages.)

Nancy told me that she enjoys being a consultant to hundreds of hard-working VA employees—giving them renewed confidence when they become unsure of the right approach in unusual situations. She thinks it is wonderful to remain behind the scenes and empower the VA employees with training or a case-by-case consultation so they can better serve our Nation's veterans.

In her spare time, Nancy enjoys quilting, reading and family time. She has been blessed with four daughters and five grandchildren – with a sixth on the way this next summer. Nancy is a member of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church and especially appreciates that her church has been extremely supportive of her and her family since they moved to Iowa in 1991, and she told me that she can't even express the importance that her church activities play in her life.

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*Johnson profile, continued from page 1*

In closing, Nancy told me she would like to challenge other women attorneys in the state to consider becoming a mentor to young women and girls. She's found that one of the best ways to do that is through the Big Brothers Big Sisters program. Recently Nancy was matched up with a 12-year-old girl whose father is in prison. Nancy feels that mentoring this girl is one way she can make a difference in that family's situation. Nancy is sure that she is going to benefit as much from this new relationship as the young girl will.

**2006-07 IOWA Board**

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**Upcoming Events**

**Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
*It's About Time* Auction, April 14**

The Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence (ICADV) will hold an event called "It's About Time." The event will be held April 14, 2007 at the Scottish Rite Consistory in Des Moines, and will feature an auction of timepieces and other merchandise bundled into time-themed packages (i.e. Time to Relax, Baby Time, Time for a Party). During this event, ICADV will honor three Iowa women who have worked to end domestic violence by using their time to lead, educate and volunteer.



There are many ways I.O.W.A. members can help make this event a success. For example, you might: (1) join the event committee; (2) become a personal event sponsor or encourage your firm or organization to become a sponsor; (3) donate a designer or custom-made clock, watch or other timepiece; or (4) share your special talents with ICADV. Interest persons are urged to take this opportunity to help end domestic violence by supporting ICADV. For more information contact Sarabeth Anderson at [sarabetha@icadv.org](mailto:sarabetha@icadv.org) or 515-244-2117.

**Newsletter Submissions**

Do you have an idea for the I.O.W.A. newsletter?



Do you have a job to advertise, news about an I.O.W.A. member, or an upcoming event to announce?

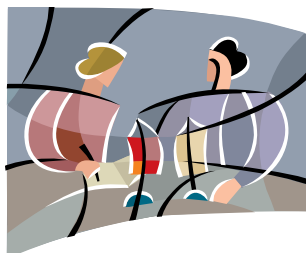
Contact Kathy Law at [kklaw@nyemaster.com](mailto:kklaw@nyemaster.com).

**In the Spotlight**

If you know of a female Iowa attorney who would like to appear in this section of this newsletter, please contact Kathy Law at [kklaw@nyemaster.com](mailto:kklaw@nyemaster.com).



**I.O.W.A. Annual Dinner, June 21**



I.O.W.A.'s annual dinner will be held Thursday, June 21, 2007. The dinner will be held in the Dubuque Room in the Downtown Marriott in Des Moines during the Iowa State Bar Association's annual meeting. The event is tentatively scheduled to begin at 6:30 p.m. with dinner to follow at 7:00 p.m.