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Nominations Sought by May 9 for Arabella Mansfield & Gertrude Rush Awards

The Iowa Organization of Women Attorneys (I.O.W.A.) is accepting nominations for the Seventh Annual Arabella Mansfield Award. In addition, the I.O.W.A. and the Iowa National Bar Association (INBA) are accepting nominations for the Sixth Annual Gertrude Rush Award. ***The deadline for submitting nominations for each award is Friday, May 9, 2008.*** The nomination criteria, forms, and instructions, as well as the names of past award recipients, are accessible on the I.O.W.A. website at www.iowawomenattorneys.org/awards.htm.

Arabella Mansfield Award



I.O.W.A. established the Arabella Mansfield Award in 2002 to recognize outstanding women lawyers in Iowa who have promoted and nurtured women in the legal profession. The award is named after Arabella Mansfield, the first woman lawyer admitted to the practice of law in the United States. She was admitted to the Iowa Bar in 1869.

Gertrude Rush Award

I.O.W.A. and the INBA jointly established the Gertrude Rush Award in 2003 to recognize a lawyer who manifests the pioneering spirit of Gertrude Rush, demonstrates leadership in the community and in the legal profession and demonstrates concern for human and civil rights. Gertrude Rush was the first African-American woman to be admitted to the practice of law in Iowa, in 1918. She became one of the founders of the National Bar Association after she and four other black lawyers were denied membership in the American Bar Association.



Presentation of Awards

The Arabella Mansfield Award and the Gertrude Rush Award will both be presented at the I.O.W.A. annual meeting and banquet Thursday evening of June 19, 2008. The event is held in conjunction with the Iowa State Bar Association annual meeting at the downtown Marriott Hotel in Des Moines.

Questions

If you have questions regarding these awards or have difficulty accessing the website information, please contact Ruth Cooperrider, I.O.W.A. Professional Action Chairperson, at 515-281-3712 or (e-mail) awards@iowawomenattorneys.org.

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Dedication of Mansfield Statue, May 2

“I am pleased to announce that the statue of Belle Babb Mansfield will be dedicated on **Friday, May 2, at 2:30 pm** on the **Iowa Wesleyan College** campus. A reception will follow the ceremony.

Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, the eldest daughter of Bobby and Ethel Kennedy and the former Lieutenant Governor of the State of Maryland will speak at the dedication. Kathleen is an attorney and worked in the U.S. Department of Justice before embarking on her political career.

It is my hope that officers and members of the Iowa Women Attorneys will be able to attend the dedication and reception. This is an historic day for all Iowa attorneys.

If you would like more information about Belle, the sculptor or Belle’s statue in progress, please check out the Iowa Wesleyan College web-site: www.iwc.edu. When you arrive at the home page, click on ‘visitor information’. There is a link for Belle under ‘visitor information’.

Sincerely yours, Christie Vilsack”

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.

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.



In the Spotlight

Tonya A. Oetken

by Bridget L. Bailey

Our featured attorney for May is Tonya A. Oetken, of Des Moines. Tonya attended undergraduate school at the University of Iowa and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in History and Economics. After graduation, her passion for the law led her to Drake University Law School, where she graduated with honors. While at Drake, Tonya was a CALI award winner in Business Administration, and held the prestigious Executive Editor position on the Drake Journal of Agricultural Law.

Currently, Tonya practices with the firm of Gislason & Hunter, LLP, in its Des Moines office. There, she practices primarily in the areas of workers’ compensation and insurance defense. Prior to joining the Gislason team, Tonya practiced with the Bradshaw firm in Des Moines and the firm of Hellige, Frey & Roe and Hutchison, Myers, Eckert & Vohs in Sioux City.

Tonya is a member of the Polk County Bar Association, the Iowa State Bar Association, the Nebraska State Bar Association, and the American Bar Association. She is actively involved as a volunteer mock trial judge, with the Blackstone Inns of Court, the Volunteer Lawyers Project; and as a mentor at Orchard Place. When Tonya finds a spare minute or two at home, she enjoys reading, watching gymnastics, football and Nascar, and spending time with her cat Peyton (named after Peyton Manning, of course).

Congratulations to Tonya Oetken, this month’s featured attorney. You can reach Ms. Oetken at Toetken@gislason.com.