

WELCOME TO THE SIXTH ISSUE OF *QUAE VIDE*,  
MURTHA CULLINA'S DIVERSITY NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2011



We at Murtha Cullina value all people and recognize that diversity within Murtha Cullina strengthens our firm and enhances the services we provide to our clients. We appreciate that meeting our diversity goals better enables us to participate in the communities where we practice law, work and live, as well as enhancing our overall experience as a member of the larger legal community. To that end, we welcome all people, without regard to race, national origin, color, ethnicity, religion or religious practices, gender, citizenship, marital status, age, mental or physical ability or disability, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity or expression.

Murtha Cullina is fortunate to have a plethora of talented women attorneys. Seven of them were recently recognized as "High Achievers" by the Connecticut Law Tribune (Sept. 6, 2010) as noted below. Yet, the long term prognosis for women in law firms, generally, is not particularly good. In a seminal report, the MIT Workplace Center conducted two studies leading to the release in 2007 of *Women Lawyers and Obstacles to Leadership: A Report of MIT Workplace Center Surveys on Comparative Career Decisions and Attrition Rates of Women and Men in Massachusetts Law Firms*. Without belaboring the details of the MIT Workplace Center Report, it is clear that women leave private law firms at a much higher rate than men, reducing the pool of potential women partners. The report concludes that "[w]omen leave the partnership track mainly due to the difficulty of combining law firm work and caring for children in a system that requires long hours under high pressure with little or inconsistent support for flexible work arrangement." In the Connecticut Law Tribune article, Murtha "High Achiever" Diane Bellantoni is featured in an article subtitled "Firms Become Flexible To Retain Women Attorneys." Attorney Bellantoni's advice to fellow women attorneys on how to balance work and family life: "You have to figure out what you want, and that is not always easy to do . . ." In the 21st century, work decisions and personal life decisions have merged, as economic conditions still require most families to evaluate carefully all options to make ends meet. Women (and men) who want to continue to have successful practices and add value to their firms often need flexible work arrangements and support from firm management to make that happen. Murtha Cullina, like many law firms, continues to strive to maintain the right balance to ensure that all of our attorneys will attain their professional goals and aspirations, while serving the legal needs of our clients in a competitive marketplace.

*Burt Cohen*

Diversity Committee Chairperson

#### MURTHA WOMEN ATTORNEYS RECOGNIZED AS 2010 HIGH ACHIEVERS

Seven Murtha Cullina attorneys were recently selected for the Connecticut Law Tribune's 2010 "Women in the Law High Achiever's Yearbook." Described as "an amazingly diverse group," these women came to the legal profession from different backgrounds and have distinguished themselves in the legal community. These attorneys are:

**Diane C. Bellantoni**, a member of the firm's Environmental Practice Group and chair of the firm's new women's initiative, Women Expanding Business, in addition to serving on the Connecticut Board of the Society of Women Environmental Professionals.

**Dena M. Castricone**, a member of the firm's Litigation Department and founder of the Connecticut Alliance for Business Opportunities, a statewide chamber of commerce designed to foster business relationships among LGBT owned and LGBT friendly businesses.

**Jennifer Morgan DelMonico**, a trial lawyer with a focus on products liability and toxic tort litigation and complex commercial litigation, who serves as partner in charge of the firm's New Haven office and is secretary and general counsel of the Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce.

**Martha Everett Meng**, chair of the firm's Long Term Care Practice group and counsel to the Connecticut Association of Health Care Facilities, Inc., with a distinguished career on various state and national

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advisory panels relating to assisted living and long term career issues.

**Lissa J. Paris**, chair of the firm’s Labor and Employment Practice Group and the Pro Bono committee, who is a fellow of the American College of Employee Benefit Lawyers and contributor and editor to BNA’s “Employee Benefits Law.”

**Elizabeth J. Stewart**, a trial lawyer who principally handles policyholder insurance coverage and complex commercial litigation, who recently completed two years as co-chair of the Connecticut Bar Association’s Federal Practice Section, in addition to a stint as chair of that section’s Local Rules Committee. Ms. Stewart also serves as managing partner and chair of the firm’s Executive Committee.

**Maria Pepe VanDerLaan**, a commercial litigator with extensive experience in health insurance coverage issues representing hospitals, as well as privately owned business and individuals facing coverage challenges for necessary medical treatment and other insurance related matters. (Maria joined Murtha Cullina LLP as a partner in November 2010 subsequent to the publication of the Yearbook.)

#### MURTHA CULLINA ATTORNEYS GETTING INVOLVED

June 24 - 27, **Taruna Garg** attended and helped plan the North American South Asian Bar Association National convention, themed “Making History” and held at the InterContinental Hotel in Boston.

On October 14, **Cherie Gabrielle Phoenix, Paul R. McCary, Michael D. Goldfarb, Taruna Garg, Daniel P. Elliott, Michael E. McDonough, and Debbie C. Albrecht** attended the South Asian Bar Association of Connecticut (SABAC) Annual Awards Dinner.

On October 27, **Thomas S. Vangel** and **Cherie Gabrielle Phoenix** attended the BLG (Boston Lawyers Group) Annual Meeting at Wilmer Hale.

On November 4, **Burt Cohen, Cherie Gabrielle Phoenix** and **Francis J. Brady** attended the LCD (Lawyers Collaborative for Diversity) Reception Celebrating the Achievements of Judges of Color.

On November 11, **Cherie Gabrielle Phoenix, Michael D. Goldfarb, Francis J. Brady, Paul R. McCary, Daniel P. Elliott,** and **Michael C. Harrington** attended the Connecticut Hispanic Bar Association Annual Awards Dinner.

On November 15, **Cherie Gabrielle Phoenix, Taruna Garg, Martin J. Burns, Christina M. Hage, Louis B. Todisco, Debbie C. Albrecht** and **Michael D. Goldfarb** attended the Sixth Annual Diversity Award Dinner.

On December 1, **Hugh F. Murray, III** and **Michael E. McDonough** attended the Boston Lawyers Group (BLG) “Creating Best Practices” series workshop.

#### WEB UPDATE: WOMEN EXPANDING BUSINESS HAS A BUSY FALL

By: **Diane C. Bellantoni**

In November 2010, WEB held the first of four brown bag lunch meetings, in Hartford and New Haven, on successful business development for women attorneys. The program included presentation of a seminar on Best Practices in Personal Marketing for Women Attorneys and a discussion on effective ways to market and make yourself visible in the community.

The firm also recently joined the organization “Leading Women CT” which offers programs, learning forums, strategic networking events and online solutions focused on providing leadership advice to women. Some of the programs recently attended include a presentation on starting internal women’s initiatives and networks (IWIn) and a presentation by Dr. Reid, President of St. Joseph’s College, on leadership.

WEB plans to continue its efforts to promote the professional development of women in the firm and in the community in 2011. Events planned include additional brown bag lunch presentations on business development, partnership with Leading Women CT to sponsor programs on women leadership issues, and hosting an event that will include women alumni of the firm.

This newsletter is one of a series of publications by Murtha Cullina LLP and should not be construed as legal advice or legal opinion on any specific facts or circumstances. The contents are intended for general information purposes only, and you are urged to consult your own lawyer concerning your own situation and any specific legal questions you may have.

#### MEMBERS OF THE DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

<u>Burt Cohen</u>	<u>Robert V. Giunta, Jr.</u>
<u>Diane C. Bellantoni</u>	<u>Elizabeth L. Leamon</u>
<u>Sara P. Bryant</u>	<u>Jane W. Murphy</u>
<u>Olga L. Gordon</u>	<u>Elizabeth Neuwirth</u>
<u>Meredith C. Burns</u>	<u>Cherie Gabrielle Phoenix</u>
<u>David P. Friedman</u>	<u>Elizabeth J. Stewart</u>
<u>Taruna Garg</u>	<u>Thomas S. Vangel</u>

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