

**MRWBA Communications Committee**  
**Annual Report, 2020-2021**  
**Jamie Allgood, Committee Chair**

MRWBA started the year with 999 contacts in the database and ended the year with 1076 contacts.

Communications maintained regular social media activity by posting about events and reminders for our organization or related organizations, MRWBA updates including our job postings Board, Member updates and spotlights, and Board statements throughout the year.

The newsletter shifted from a monthly publication to distribution every two weeks beginning in the late summer. Between 26% and 37% of recipients (ranging from 251 to 356 individuals) opened each issue of the newsletter with between 2 and 5% (34 to 84 individuals) following a link within the newsletter to the website.

A redesign of the logo and an update of the color scheme was completed and approved by the Board in the Fall. The old logo, while representing the Richmond skyline, was deemed to be outdated and unrecognizable as a number of the buildings represented no longer exist. The new logo is based on Richmond's iconic railroad bridge. The rebranding of the website was completed during December and presented to the membership in the January 6<sup>th</sup> news update.

**MRWBA JUDICIAL CANDIDATE ENDORSEMENT COMMITTEE  
ANNUAL REPORT  
2020-2021**

**Mollie C. Barton, President-Elect and JCE Committee Chair**

On November 11, 2020 the JCE Committee participated in virtual interviews organized by the Richmond Bar Association for the Henrico County Circuit Court being left by Judge Yoffy's retirement. Reports of the Committee's findings were sent to the candidates and to the Chairs of the Senate and House Courts of Justice Committees, as well as posted on the MRWBA website.

On January 8, 2021 the JCE participated in virtual interviews for the vacancy on the Richmond City Circuit Court being left by the retirement of Judge Joi Taylor. The committee met after the interviews and made findings, which have been posted on the MRWBA website. Reports of the Committee's findings were sent to the candidates and to the Chairs of the Senate and House Courts of Justice Committees, as well as posted on the MRWBA website.

Some of the candidates for this position had interviewed with the RBA within the past year, so the RBA's procedures did not require another interview. We coordinated with the Hill-Tucker Bar Association to conduct virtual interviews of these three candidates. The committee agreed that we would update our procedures to match those of the RBA, so that additional interviews can be eliminated in the future, as needed.

Interviews are scheduled for May 19, 2021 for the Richmond Circuit Court seat being vacated by the retirement of Judge Snuckols.

As of the date of this report, 10 candidates have requested to be interviewed.

I will be updating the JCE Committee Procedures guide and reviewing the By-Laws to make recommendations for any changes in the 2021-2022 bar year.

**MRWBA Legislative Committee**  
**Year-End Report, 2020-2021**  
**Alexis Fisher-Rizk and Morgan Faulkner, Chairs**

This year, the MRWBA continued its tradition of hosting local legislators for our annual Legislative Luncheon. Our luncheon this year was held virtually, on April 28<sup>th</sup>.

Our luncheon speakers included Senator Ryan McDougle, Senator Siobhan Dunnavant, Senator Jennifer McClellan, Senator Ghazala Hashmi, Delegate Jeff Bourne, Delegate Dawn Adams, Delegate Schuyler VanValkenburg, and Delegate Carrie Coyner. Each representative spent a few minutes updating our membership on various changes the General Assembly enacted in the 2021 regular and special sessions, and then answered audience questions.

As always, our membership appreciated the opportunity to hear from and interact with our elected officials. We had approximately 77 members and 9 nonmembers participate in this year's virtual luncheon.

## **MRWBA Membership Committee Year-End Report, 2020-2021**

### **Erin Kelly, Committee Chair**

MRWBA started the fiscal year with 259 dues paying members and, despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, finished the year with 266 dues paying members.

This year, we hosted a virtual happy hour in December with a spotlight focus on in-house roles. Erin Kelly moderated the event with Lindsay Blackwood and Lisa Booth discussing their in-house positions and career paths. We had an engaged audience and a lively discussion between the panelists and members.

In May, we were able to host our first in-person event of the year at Willow Oaks. While the first part of the event was devoted to honoring two outstanding women and Bar business items, the second half of the event was spent networking and enjoying an evening together.

Finally, this year as member benefit MRWBA began accepting job postings from employers seeking to hire an attorney for a full- or part-time legal position, or to fill a position for which a JD is preferred. All positions are posted on a Members Only page of the website for thirty days, or less, as requested by the employer, and an e-mail is sent to notify members as new positions are posted.

- There is no fee to post a position.
- In an effort to improve transparency, MRWBA requests, but does not require, that employers include information on the starting salary/hiring salary range for all positions.
- Between October 8<sup>th</sup>, when the service began, and May 31<sup>st</sup> there were 64 positions posted. Between 39% and 53% of the membership (ranging from 105 to 133 individuals) opened each e-mail, with as few as 2% (10 individuals) and as many as 20% (54 individuals) following the link to review the detailed job descriptions.

## **MRWBA Mentorship Committee Report** **2020-2021**

**Katy Groover, Chair**

The Mentorship Committee had a very successful year. Despite the COVID restrictions, we still had a lot of interest from both MRWBA mentors and RWL student mentees. By the end of the year, we matched almost 90 mentor/mentee pairs, which is up by at least 10 percent from recent years. Thank you to all of the MRWBA members who agreed to mentor students and young lawyers this year - your time and mentorship are so appreciated.

Our fall mentorship social was held in September, virtually on Zoom, with almost all of our mentor/mentee pairs in attendance. We used the Zoom break-out room function to allow for mentors and mentee pairs have personal interactions and conversations with one another, as well as with other mentor pairs, in order to ensure the same beneficial networking that we typically receive at the in-person mentorship events.

In April, we held our spring mentorship social, again, virtually on Zoom. Thinking that mentor/mentee pairs has already gotten to know each other throughout the year, we decided to use the event as an opportunity for mentorship pairs to engage in speed-networking with one another. Judge Elizabeth Hanes served as our guest speaker for the event, discussing those who have mentored her throughout her career, and how meaningful those relationships have been to her success. We also honored the recipients of the Phoebe Hall Mentorship Award. This year's recipients were Carole Yeatts and Jackie Stone, both of whom were extremely deserving of the honor, and serve as role models to us all on the importance of women mentoring and promoting other women. The event was well attended and seemingly enjoyed by all.

Natalie King, who served as the Vice President of Richmond Women's Law (RWL) Program, played an instrumental role in the success of both mentorship events, organizing and ensuring the attendance of the law students, as well as managing the Zoom set-up and success of the break-out rooms. The partnership between our organizations throughout the year continues to be strong.

As we look ahead to the next bar year, we're focused on continuing to maintain a strong relationship between MRWBA members and the RWL students. We're also committed to expanding mentorship to newly admitted members of the Virginia State Bar, in order to diversify our program and to continue to mentor women in the field of law across a wide spectrum.

**MRWBA Programs Committee**  
**Year-End Report 2020-2021**  
**Rebecca Imholt and Danielle Smith, Co-Chairs**

This year, the MRWBA continued its tradition of hosting a wide variety of luncheons. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were unable to host our luncheons in person but rather moved to a virtual format for the entirety of the year.

We started the year with a legislative update on the Special Session of the General Assembly. Panelists Senator Siobhan Dunnavant, Senator Jennifer McClellan, Delegate Lasherese Aird and Delegate Carrie Coyner discussed the August 2020 Special Legislative Session and the legislation most important to them.

In October, the candidates running for Richmond Mayor in the November 2020 election joined us and discussed their visions for the City of Richmond.

At our November virtual luncheon, colleagues from the Virginia Judges and Lawyers Assistance Program (formerly Lawyers helping Lawyers) discussed compassion fatigue and provided members with insight on how to deal with the ever-demanding challenges of the legal profession. This luncheon was approved for CLE credit.

We unfortunately could not hold our annual awards luncheon in December due to COVID-19. Instead, Joyvan Malbon-Griffin of Minnesota Lawyers Mutual Insurance discussed diversity in the legal profession in her seminar called "The Divide over Diversity." This luncheon was approved for CLE credit.

In January, MRWBA welcomed Jennifer Daglio from Hunton, Andrews, Kurth and Sarah Warner from ThompsonMcMullen to discuss the Eviction Diversion Program launched by the City of Richmond, Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia, and the Central Virginia Legal Aid Society. Our speakers delved into the program and provided training for those who would like to assist in this volunteer opportunity. This program was approved for CLE credit.

At February's luncheon we explored Diversity on the Bench with an amazing group of panelists. Judges Rondelle Herman, Randall Johnson, Jr., Brice Lambert, Linda Lambert, Jacqueline McClenney and Roderick Young highlighted the gains made in the area of diversity and challenges still facing members of the bench and bar.

Our March luncheon focused on the topic of Women in the Legal Profession. Employment lawyers Cherie Parson of Parson Law PLLC and Barbara Queen of LawrenceQueen discussed the employment challenges facing women in the legal profession in honor of Women's History Month.

April was our annual Legislative Luncheon, which was well attended and informative as always. Panelists included Delegate Dawn Adams, Delegate Jeffrey Bourne, Delegate Carrie Coyner, Senator Siobhan Dunavant, Senator Ghazala Hashmi, Senator Jennifer McClellan, Senator Ryan McDougle, and Delegate Schuyler VanValkenburg who provided a detailed overview of the 2021 Legislative Session.

Registrations for the virtual events ranged from a low of 25 people to a high of 86.

Overall, this was a challenging but successful programs year for the MRWBA as we maintained our excellent programs throughout the difficulty of COVID-19.

**Sponsorship Committee Year-End Report, 2020-2021**  
**Amy Smith, Chair**

Sponsors were secured for most of our luncheons this year. We offered a reduced rate for sponsors this year given that all of our programming was held virtually. For our luncheons, we had a total of 5 platinum sponsors and 6 gold sponsors. We also had platinum sponsors for the Membership and Mentorship events. Total sponsorship revenue for 2020-2021 was \$9,120.

October	Breit Cantor Grana and Buckner (Platinum) Thompson McMullan PC (Gold)
November	Reed Smith (Platinum) Hathaway Adair (Gold)
December	Minnesota Lawyers Mutual (Platinum) Juridical Solutions (Gold)
January	Prospect Blue (Platinum) Bowen Ten (Gold)
February	Isler Dare, P.C. (Gold)
April	Locke & Quinn (Platinum) The McCammon Group (Gold)
May	The McCammon Group (Platinum)
Mentorship Events	Williams Mullen (Platinum)
Membership Events	McGuireWoods (Platinum)

## **MRWBA Year-End Treasurer's Report 2020-2021**

**Mary Hunt, Treasurer**

The Metropolitan Richmond Women's Bar Association ("MRWBA") Bylaws Section III (3.7) states that the Treasurer "shall submit at each annual May meeting of the Association a suitably classified, written annual report of the Association's financial position including (a) all receipts and disbursements occurring during such period and (b) all obligations outstanding at the end of the period, with any comments as to current and prospective future financial position that the Treasurer may deem informative." Accordingly, the Treasurer reports the following with regards to the 2020-2021 bar year.

In August of 2019, the MRWBA opened two interest bearing money market accounts, one associated with the general checking account and another associated with the Domestic Relations Pamphlet ("DRP") account. As of June 6, 2021, the MRWBA's bank account balances are as follows:

- \$4,992.23 in the general checking account ending in 8444
- \$2,881.27 in the DRP account ending in 1880
- \$ \$7,170.96 in the general account money market account ending in 9058
- \$12,376.07 in the DRP money market account ending in 9066

At the beginning of the MRWBA bar year, communities were at a continued halt of almost all activity as a result of the global health pandemic, COVID19. All industries, including the legal field, felt the rippling effects of canceled public gatherings, and unsurprisingly this had a fiscal impact on MRWBA. The executive board and committee chairs all made changes to their anticipated budgets for the year and reduced costs and expenses where possible.

This year MRWBA's board undertook the task of developing a strategic plan for the organization moving forward. A strategic planning committee was formed and worked with Spark Mill with an anticipated final cost of \$17,475.

The MRWBA's primary sources of revenue are membership dues, luncheon and event sponsorships, and luncheon receipts. As of May 31, 2021, membership dues generated approximately \$17,415 in revenue, slightly above the budgeted \$17,175 amount. Sponsorships totaled \$9,120, slightly less than the \$9,500 budgeted amount. As MRWBA's luncheons were held all virtually this year the registrations

brought in only \$1,203, more than the \$520 budgeted amount but significantly less than prior years when in-person events were held.

Membership dues for Full Members remained \$100 and were \$50 for Associate Members. The virtual Lunch-In registrations were free for members and law students and \$15 for non-members. The MRWBA waived dues for honorary (judicial) members, those who had been admitted to the Virginia State Bar or graduated from law school within the past 12 months, and to law students. The organization's main expenses are the monthly luncheon costs and the MRWBA's contract with Halcyon Management LLC for executive administration services.

The Audit Committee, which operates separately from the Treasurer, recommended that the MRWBA's accountant do a "review" as opposed to a "compilation" in the next bar year. However due to budgetary concerns this was delayed until next year. The organization's tax returns for the 2020-2021 bar year were timely filed, with \$1,150 paid.

The organization's state corporation commission annual registration was timely renewed and paid.

Overall, MRWBA did sustain a loss of slightly more than \$10,000 for the year, which is significantly less than the budgeted loss of nearly \$28,000. The loss was covered by the cash reserves that were on hand to start the year. In light of the challenges presented by the pandemic, the year could have been much worse than it was.