



**National Association of Women
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**THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN LAWYERS
AND THE NAWL FOUNDATION CONDUCT THE FOURTH NATIONAL
SURVEY ON THE RETENTION AND PROMOTION OF WOMEN LAWYERS**

CHICAGO – The National Association of Women Lawyers (NAWL) and the NAWL Foundation announced today that the Foundation will begin conducting the fourth annual National Survey on the Retention and Promotion of Women in Law Firms. The NAWL Survey is the only national study that annually tracks the progress of women lawyers in the leadership ranks of private firms. Using data from the nation’s largest 200 law firms, the Survey provides a comparative view of the careers of men and women lawyers, particularly in the areas of equity partnership, law firm governance and compensation.

“The NAWL Survey is a critical instrument for tracking over time the progress of women attorneys in law firms in terms of status, compensation, and leadership. In these turbulent economic times, it is especially important that the profession have an accurate reading of any changes that may be taking place with regard to these issues,” stated Lisa Horowitz, President of the National Association of Women Lawyers, which is co-sponsoring the Survey.

The 2009 Survey is particularly important because it will contribute to the growing statistical body of longitudinal information collected by NAWL in previous years. “As the Survey continues into its fourth year, we have added new content to analyze how women lawyers are faring in the current economy, and the extent to which a firm’s partnership structure and drive for business generation affect opportunities for women to succeed in private practice,” observed Stephanie Scharf, Chair of the NAWL Survey Committee and President of the NAWL Foundation, the lead sponsor for the Survey.

In addition to the core questions in prior Surveys regarding how readily women move up the ranks in private practice, including their compensation and leadership roles, new questions in the 2009 Survey address part-time working arrangements, the gender of law firm rainmakers, and the extent to which the recent unprecedented attorney layoffs disproportionately affect women. Survey Committee Co-Chair Barbara Flom commented, “Each year’s survey seeks to deepen our understanding of what factors impede or enhance women’s career progress and success in the private practice environment. We feel, though, that this year there is heightened urgency, as we face the most challenging business climate any of us have seen in our lifetimes.”

In keeping with its policy, NAWL does not identify or publish data about any individual firm. The data are blind-coded and analyzed at the aggregate level by an independent survey consultant. Information from the 2009 Survey will be summarized in a report that will include trend and comparative analyses. The report will be made available to the legal profession to benchmark the progress of law firms in advancing women lawyers and for insights into factors that drive or limit women’s progress. Along with other NAWL initiatives, the Survey results can guide firms in setting their policies, practices and

programs for the retention and promotion of women lawyers. Copies of the 2006, 2007 and 2008 NAWL Survey reports can be viewed at www.nawl.org.

About the National Association of Women Lawyers (NAWL): NAWL is the leading national voluntary organization devoted to promoting the interests of women lawyers and to advancing women's rights. Founded over 100 years ago, NAWL has historically served as an educational forum and an active voice for the concerns of women in the legal profession.

About the NAWL Foundation: Founded in 2008, the NAWL Foundation is the 501(c)(3) arm of NAWL, focusing on research and special education projects for advancing women in the law and women's rights. The NAWL Foundation is the principal sponsor of the NAWL Survey.

For more information about the 2009 Survey and past Survey Reports, visit www.nawl.org

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