



Conference Focuses on Maximizing Inclusion for Attorneys with Disabilities

*Sayre Happich
Assistant Director, Communications &
Public Relations*

BASF's first conference on hiring and retaining lawyers with disabilities was a complete success. The event served as a substantive, practical, positive seminar on hiring and retaining of lawyers with disabilities with a focus on new technology; best practices

Chairs Betsy Johnsen, attorney at law, and Kathi Pugh, Morrison & Foerster, has been in the works for six months. Reaching out to attorneys with disabilities was one of the issues BASF President Nanci Clarence wanted to focus on during her 2007 presidency.

The issue of hiring and retaining attorneys with disabilities has even caught the attention of San Francisco's



BASF President-Elect Jim Donato, Cooley Godward Kronish with San Francisco Public Defender Jeff Adachi, 2005 UC Davis Law School Graduate Andy Berk and Robert Friese, Shartsis Friese.

for policies and accommodations; and interviewing.

The conference, put together by BASF's Disability Rights Committee

government – both City Attorney Dennis Herrera and Public Defender Jeff Adachi were in attendance.

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Hiring and Retaining Lawyers with Disabilities Focus of Half Day Conference

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"The issues discussed at the conference were not those discussed in your typical CLE presentation--or anywhere else really--and are vital to encouraging a diverse and inclusive legal community here in San Francisco," said conference panelist Cristina Rubke of Shartsis Friese LLP. "We are hopeful that this is the first step towards maximizing inclusion in this community."

Judge David Tatel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District Court of Columbia was the keynote speaker for the conference.

Clarence was optimistic about the success of the conference saying, "We have generated real momentum in our organization and beyond on this important part of our diversity agenda."

The conference was videotaped and recorded. For more information, please contact Barbara Fanning at bfanning@sfbat.org.



Featured panelists included (from left) Cristina Rubke, Shartsis Friese; Mazan Basrawi, Bingham McCutchen; Lucy Greco, Assistive Technology Specialist, UC Berkeley; Stephen Goff, LexisNexis; and Ronald Gaal, Accommodation Specialist, San Francisco State University.



Jan Garrett, Executive Director, Center for Independent Living and Teresa Renaker, Lewis, Feinberg, Lee, Renaker & Jackson.



Conference panelist Joshua Davidson of UC Berkeley Boalt Hall School of Law.



Disability Rights Committee Chair Kathi Pugh, Morrison & Foerster and BASF Treasurer Russ Roeca, Roeca Haas Hager.



Panel speaker Mazan Basrawi, Bingham McCutchen with keynote speaker Judge David Tatel.



Robert Friese, panelist Cristina Rubke and Paul Feasby, all of Shartsis Friese.



BASF Board Member and Equality Committee Chair Bill Lann Lee, Lewis, Feinberg, Lee, Renaker & Jackson; Jeff Adachi, San Francisco Public Defender and BASF Board Member Lori Nachlis, Nachlis & Fink.



More than 50 people were in attendance at BASF's Disability Conference.



The conference featured a presentation showing the latest technology in tools for attorneys with disabilities.

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