

Legal Association Honors Women Who Make a Difference

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The George W. Crawford Black Bar Association will honor two business leaders this month who have encouraged young, minority women in the Hartford region to explore and enhance careers in law, math and technology.

Laurie Robinson will receive the first annual George W. Crawford Trailblazer Award during the association's annual dinner for her work promoting career advancement and diversity in the legal profession and workplace.

Robinson is senior vice president and assistant general counsel of CBS Corp. in New York City, where she works with more than 150 radio and television stations nationwide. She oversees the legal department's special projects, facilitates training and works with various divisions.

She is also the founder and CEO of Corporate Counsel Women of Color (CCWC), a non-profit organization she started in 2004 for women attorneys of color who work primarily for Fortune 1000 and Forbes 2000 legal departments.



Laurie Robinson, senior vice president and assistant general counsel, CBS Corp.

CCWC offers networking opportunities, work-life balance workshops and various training sessions to more than 2,400 women from 900 companies around the U.S. Many of its members and company partners are located in Connecticut.

CCWC works with an estimated 20 companies in the state, including Aetna Inc. and Girl Scouts of Connecticut, both in Hartford; Praxair, Inc. in Danbury; GE Commercial Finance in Norwalk and Pfizer Inc. Stamford.

"CCWC serves the purpose of promoting diversity in the legal profession and the goal of promoting diversity in the legal profession is a central tenant of the George W. Crawford Black Bar Association," said Natalie Braswell, vice president of the non-

profit group.

Robinson was exposed to law at a young age through her father, a labor and employment attorney in Washington, D.C. She graduated magna cum laude from North Carolina Central University before earning her law degree from Indiana University School of Law at Bloomington in 1998.

She launched her legal career as an intern at the National Football League in New York and joined CBS in 2002.

Robinson said CCWC will continue to expand. Next up is a plan to implement social networking capabilities on the CCWC website and start publishing studies about minority women in corporate legal departments.

“Ms. Robinson’s professional accomplishments stand alone as a testament to female attorneys of color who have blazed a successful trail in the legal community,” said Braswell.

“There are quite a few prominent attorneys of color in Connecticut who are members of CCWC Connecticut that are trail blazers in their own right who consider their membership in CCWC invaluable,” she said.

Founded in 1977, the George W. Crawford Black Bar Association is a volunteer, statewide organization of attorneys, judges and law students in Connecticut.

The Hartford-based association will also recognize Pamela Reid, president of Saint Joseph College, for her numerous contributions to the local community, including her work with ProLiteracy Worldwide and Connecticut Children’s Medical Center.

Reid will receive the first annual George W. Crawford Visionary Award for her work with GO-GIRL (Gaining Options: Girls Investigate Real Life), a math, science, technology and engineering enrichment program for middle school girls.

Reid helped launch the GO-GIRL organization with a National Science Foundation grant in 2000 when she was a professor at the University of Michigan. Today, the program is now one of six nationwide. It recently expanded to the Hartford region.

Braswell said the association selected Reid for her “life-long commitment to a vision of education and success that has allowed numerous students to obtain higher education degrees that prepare them for leadership opportunities and service in the Connecticut community.”

Robinson and Reid will be honored during the bar group’s annual dinner on April 23 at The Society Room of Hartford. For more information, visit www.georgecrawfordblackbar.org.

