

The CDO Presents:

Careers in Public Interest Solo Practice

3/15/10

Panelist Biographies

Marc S. Janowitz

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Marc became a member of the State Bar of California in 1980 and opened the Law Offices of Marc S. Janowitz which he operated for 25 years. For his first six years of practice he worked by himself specializing in the areas of workers' rights and tenants' rights. In 1986 he began supervising two students enrolled in the State Bar's Law Office Study Program. The two students passed the first year bar exam as well as the professional responsibility exam in their first years of study. One of his students completed the four year program and passed the bar exam in 1990. The other student remained working with Marc and his former student as a paralegal, law clerk. Together, the three of them continued to practice law with Marc in his offices for the next sixteen years. Throughout his 25 years of private practice Marc represented low income tenants and workers in the complete gamut of housing and employment issues. Marc has litigated cases in the trial courts and at all levels of appeals, including a successful case before the California Supreme Court. Marc served two four-year terms as an elected Commissioner on the Berkeley Rent Board from 1994 through 2002. For the past five years Marc has been a supervising attorney in the housing practice of the East Bay Community Law Center.

Michelle L. Roberts, Springer-Sullivan & Roberts LLP

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Michelle Roberts has an extensive background of advocating for disabled individuals and employees. Ms. Roberts is a member of the National Employment Lawyers Association (NELA), the California Employment Lawyers Association (CELA), and the American Association of Justice (AAJ). Ms. Roberts has been recognized by Cambridge Who's Who for demonstrating dedication, leadership and excellence in litigation. She is a co-chair on the Ethics Subcommittee of the American Bar Association's Section of Labor & Employment Law. From 2005 to 2007, prior to establishing a partnership with Cassie Springer-Sullivan, Ms. Roberts worked in Oakland with a firm that specializes in plaintiff-side Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) and wage and hour litigation.

For full bio, visit <http://www.ssrlawgroup.com/Michelle.html>

Alma Soongi Beck, Beck Law Group

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Alma Soongi Beck, Esq. helps individuals, couples and families navigate issues relating to estates and trusts, probate and trust administration, domestic partnership and property co-ownership, particularly as they affect unmarried and same sex couples. Ms. Beck earned her J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center in 1998, and an LL.M. degree in Taxation (graduate law degree) from Golden Gate Law School in August 2004. For high school, she graduated from Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts and for college, earned a B.A. in American and Ethnic Studies from Yale University. Ms. Beck also leads diversity awareness and cross-cultural communication workshops for law firms, legal organizations, Fortune 500 companies and non-profit organizations.

For full bio, visit: <http://becklawgroup.com/attorneys>

Janelle Orsi, Law Office of Janelle Orsi

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Janelle Orsi is an attorney living and working in Berkeley, California. Her law and mediation practice is focused on helping individuals and organizations share resources and create more sustainable communities. She specializes in nonprofit, small business, and real estate law, as well as a new field of practice – sharing law. Previously, she was Executive Director of Women Defenders, , a professional organization of women defense attorneys and has worked in a range of legal practice areas, including criminal defense, youth law, immigration, adoptions, LGBT rights, and estate planning. She has worked for or interned with the National Center for Lesbian Rights, Legal Services for Children, the Youth Law Center, and the San Francisco Juvenile Public Defender. She attended Boalt Hall School of Law at UC Berkeley. Prior to becoming an attorney, Janelle worked in the fields of nonprofit development, education, and social science research. Janelle volunteers her mediation skills with SEEDS Community Resolution Center. She is also founder and Coordinator of the Music Sanctuary Project, a program of Guitars not Guns that provides music lessons to detained immigrant youth. Janelle lives in “casual cohousing,” shares garden space and regular meals with her neighbors, takes part in a grocery co-op, shares an office space, and is always looking for new ways to share in her life. Education: Pomona College (B.A. Cum Laude; Phi Beta Kappa, 2002); Boalt Hall School of Law, UC Berkeley (Juris Doctorate, 2007).