

**Debra S. Frank Installed as Chair-Elect of the Los Angeles
County Bar Association Family Law Section Executive
Committee**

Los Angeles, CA

Tuesday, December 1, 2009



Debra S. Frank, Certified Family Law Specialist

Debra S. Frank, a Certified Family Law Specialist in Century City, California, was installed as Chair-Elect of the Los Angeles County Bar Family Law Section at the section's Dinner Dance and Installation of Officers held on October 17, 2009 at the Luxe Hotel Bel Air, Los Angeles. The Family Law Section is one of the largest sections of the Los Angeles County Bar Association, the largest bar association in the country.

Debra S. Frank (<http://www.DSFrankLawOffice.com>), a Certified Family Law Specialist in Century City, California, was installed as Chair-Elect of the Los Angeles County Bar Association Family Law Section at the LACBA Family Law Dinner Dance and Installation of Officers on October 17, 2009, held at the Luxe Hotel Bel Air, Los Angeles. She is the former Section Treasurer, Secretary and Vice Chair. The Los Angeles County Bar Association has 38,000 members which makes it the largest bar association in the United States and it is the largest provider of continuing legal education in California. The Family Law Section is one of the largest sections of the Los Angeles County Bar Association.

As Chair-Elect, Attorney Frank will be in charge of organizing the 42nd Annual Family Law Symposium to be held May 8, 2010. She will also be the editor of the accompanying book. The Annual Family Law Symposium is the section's biggest CLE event and offers a comprehensive update on a wide variety of topics relevant to the practice of family law. She will lead the Executive Committee meetings in the chair's absence and is being groomed for the chair position.

The other Board members of Family Law Section Executive Committee for 2009-2010 are Roberta Bennett, Chair; Robert C. Brandt, Vice-Chair; Lynette Berg Robe, Secretary; and Seth Kramer, Treasurer. The goals of the Family Law Section are to educate attorneys and the public, comment on proposed legislation and promulgate new legislation, work with judicial officers and court staff to improve the administration of justice, and support organizations that provide free and low cost legal services.

The Family Law Executive Committee will be reviewing the draft recommendations of the Elkins Family Law Task Force. The Elkins Family Law Task Force, chaired by Associate Justice Laurie D. Zelon of the Court of Appeal, Second Appellate District (Los Angeles), was appointed in May 2008 to conduct a comprehensive review of family law proceedings and recommend to the Judicial Council of California proposals that will increase access to justice, ensure due process, and provide for more effective and consistent rules, policies, and procedures. Two of the Executive Committee members, the Honorable Mark A. Juhas, Judge of the Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles and Peter M. Walzer, Walzer & Melcher LLP are among the 38 members of the task force. The Elkins Family Law Task Force has released over 100 draft recommendations for a two-month public comment period. The draft recommendations address 21 different topics, including the right to present live testimony at hearings; expanding legal representation; caseload management; contested child custody; children's voices; minor's counsel; domestic violence; enhancing mechanisms to handle perjury; judicial branch education; and leadership, accountability, and resources.

The Executive Committee reviews legislation and will be following the implementation of the recent Civil Gideon legislation. California Assembly Bill 590 creates pilot projects to appoint counsel for low-income Californians in cases affecting basic human needs and is the first program in the country to recognize a right to representation in key civil cases and provide it for people fighting eviction, loss of child custody, domestic abuse or neglect of the elderly or disabled.

The Executive Committee will be analyzing family court operations as a result of budget crisis. The Judicial Council approved the court closures on the third Wednesday of the month starting in September 2009 and continuing through June 2010. The Los Angeles Superior Court faces an estimated budget shortfall of nearly \$90 million for the coming fiscal year—nearly double the amount in the most recent

budget crisis that erupted in 2002, which ultimately resulted in closure of 29 courtrooms and layoffs of more than 150 employees.

Under the leadership of the Executive Committee, the Family Law Section provides excellent continuing education programs. It produces an eNews sent to members via email, as well as a print newsletter. The Family Law List Serve is a very active online forum where attorneys exchange practice tips among the community of Family Law practitioners. Among the section's many programs are the Child Custody Colloquium held Saturday, October 24, 2009, a Trial Advocacy Program set for March 20, 2010, and the Annual Family Law Symposium to be held May 8, 2010. The section participates in name-only sponsorships with other bar associations and providers, including the State Bar Mediation Panel at Pepperdine to be held April 10, 2010 and the annual Meet the Judges Night organized by the Beverly Hills Bar Association.

The Family Law Section provides financial support and name-only sponsorships to community organizations and other groups, including the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC), California Chapter, the Levitt & Quinn Family Law Center and the Harriett Buhai Center for Family Law.

Debra S. Frank is a member of the Los Angeles County Bar Association Family Law Section Executive Committee and its Chair-Elect, editor of its annual Family Law Symposium book, and a mediator for the Los Angeles County Bar Association Family Law section. She regularly serves as a moderator and presenter for family law programs. She just completed three-year terms as a Commissioner for the Family Law Advisory Commission, Board of Legal Specialization and as the Chair of the Financial Issues South subcommittee of the State Bar Family Law Executive Committee and currently serves as its Vice Chair. She is a Board Member of the Association of Certified Family Law Specialists (ACFLS) and the current Newsletter Editor. Attorney Frank was installed as a member of the Beverly Hills Bar Association Board of Governors at the Beverly Hills Bar Association Installation Dinner on September 30, 2009. She serves on the Executive Committee of Beverly Hills Bar Association Family Law Section, the Board of Governors of the Century City Bar Association, and is Chair of the Century City Bar Association Family Law Section. Debra S. Frank was admitted to the California bar in 1977 and is a member of the District of Columbia bar. She graduated from Boston University in 1970 with honors, Carnegie Mellon University (M.A., with honors, 1972), and Southwestern Law School (J.D., 1977).

With over twenty years experience in family law, her practice includes divorce and dissolution of marriage; California community property; spousal support/alimony; child support; child custody and child visitation; breach of fiduciary duty; domestic partnerships; prenuptial & postnuptial agreements; litigation; modifications of custody and support agreements; domestic violence; interstate custody; international custody; paternity and paternity tests; and debt division. Southern California *Super Lawyers* magazine named her as one of the top attorneys in Southern California for 2009 and 2010.

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