

SPOTLIGHT ON SHARON WEISS
First Recipient of the
Kathryn R. Heidt Memorial Award

At the Fall Meeting of the ABA Section of Business Law Business Bankruptcy Committee in Scottsdale, Arizona, Michael St. Patrick Baxter, Chair of the Committee, awarded the first annual Kathryn R. Heidt Memorial Award to Los Angeles attorney Sharon Z. Weiss. Weiss is a partner with the law firm of Richardson & Patel LLP and has been active in the ABA's Section of Business Law and the Committee for many years.

Ms. Weiss joined Richardson Patel as its first female Partner in 2008. Prior to joining the firm she was a Partner with Weinstein, Weiss & Ordubegian, LLP, which she joined as an associate in 1997. Ms. Weiss has extensive experience in a wide area of insolvency matters from various perspectives, including representation of trustees, individual and corporate debtors, creditors and creditors' committees. In April 2007, Ms. Weiss was profiled as an Outstanding Woman Bankruptcy Lawyer by *Bankruptcy Law360* and has been named by the *Los Angeles Magazine* as a Southern California "Superlawyer" since 2005. Ms. Weiss was also appointed to the Bankruptcy Mediation Program Panel for the United States Bankruptcy Court, Central District of California in 2006 and appointed in 2007 as an Attorney Settlement Officer for the United States District Court, Central District of California.

Ms. Weiss' involvement in the Business Bankruptcy Committee has been significant. Currently she serves as Co-Chair of the Programs and Publications Subcommittee and is Co-Chair of the Woman Business Law Network of the Diversity Committee within the Section. Her previous leadership roles in the ABA include Chair of the Law Student and Young Lawyer Involvement Subcommittee; Co-Chair of the Membership: Minorities, Women & Young Lawyers Subcommittee; Vice Chair of the Executory Contracts Subcommittee and Vice Chair of the Litigation Committee. She is also a member of the Board of Directors of the Los Angeles Bankruptcy Forum and is a co-founding member of the Restructuring and Insolvency Professionals of Southern California. Ms. Weiss is an active member of the American Bankruptcy Institute, American Bar Association, California Bankruptcy Forum, Financial Lawyers Conference, International Woman's Insolvency and Restructuring Confederation and the Los Angeles County Bar Association.

Ms. Weiss displays universal generosity of spirit with all those with whom she comes in contact. One example is her participation as a member of the Hurricane Katrina Working Group and role in the preparation of a business bankruptcy primer to assist lawyers in advising their clients in the devastated areas. Ms. Weiss is also the co-founder of the Nancy H. Newman Memorial Scholarship Fund, which provides financial assistance to worthy students at Southwestern University School of Law in Los Angeles. She has authored or contributed to numerous ABA articles or other work related to bankruptcy law.

When presenting Ms. Weiss with the award, Mr. Baxter remarked that "if Kate had selected the recipient, she would have selected Sharon." After receiving the award, Ms. Weiss stated, "I am honored to be the first recipient of this distinguished award in memory of Kate Heidt, someone who I deeply respected. I feel very fortunate to be a contributing member of the

Section of Business Law and am honored to be a part of Kate's legacy. I hope to continue her legacy by recruiting young lawyers to join the Business Bankruptcy Committee and by encouraging senior lawyers to become more involved."

Background of the Award

Kate died unexpectedly in May of 2005 at the age of 51. At the time of her death, she was the chair of the ABA Section of Business Law's Business Bankruptcy Committee. This memorial award honors Kate's memory. Kate was a tenured member of the faculty at the University of Pittsburgh School of Law. She was an accomplished author, scholar, teacher, lawyer, and administrator. In addition to her leadership roles at the ABA, she served in leadership capacities at the American Association of Law School's Section on Creditors' and Debtors' Rights. She was a counselor in the truest sense of the word -- a wonderful mother, a friend to many, a dedicated mentor to students and young lawyers, and a trusted voice of wisdom. She left us too soon. This Award is designed to serve as a lasting tribute to all she was and all for which she stood and to recognize the importance of bankruptcy education and scholarship to the ABA Business Bankruptcy Committee and the bankruptcy profession.

In order to be eligible to receive the Kathryn R. Heidt Memorial Award, individuals must meet the following criteria:

- Be an attorney or law student;
- Be a member of the ABA;
- Be under age 40;
- Either have published a recent article on a bankruptcy related topic in an ABA sponsored publication or have produced a significant report, study, or other work product in conjunction with service on the ABA Business Bankruptcy Committee, a subcommittee of the ABA Business Bankruptcy Committee, or task force of the ABA Business Bankruptcy Committee;
- Have demonstrated leadership potential within the ABA or the larger legal community; and
- Have displayed generosity of spirit.