

LAWYERS JOURNAL

WLD honors Doyle with Los Mansmann Award

By Madelyn Dinnerstein

A woman known for her efforts to fight discrimination and her dedication to mentoring will be celebrated at this year's annual meeting of the ACBA Women in the Law Division.

Ellen Doyle, of-counsel with Feinstein Doyle Payne & Kravec LLC, will receive the Carol Los Mansmann Helping Hand Award during a cocktail reception Tuesday, May 23, at the Kimpton Hotel Monaco in downtown Pittsburgh.

"The WLD unanimously nominated Ellen for her bravery and dedication in promoting equality in the law and consistent mentoring in the legal profession," said Leah K. Sell, a WLD Council member and chair of the Annual Meeting Committee.

Doyle concentrates on litigating complex class actions against a broad range of large financial and corporate defendants in federal and state court. She has represented ERISA plan participants, people who are insured, borrowers, consumers and others adversely affected by corporate abuses and financial overreaching. ERISA stands for Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974.

Along with her service to the ACBA, particularly the WLD, Doyle is vice chair of the Board of the Women's Law Project. She is a graduate of the Northeastern University School of Law in Boston.

Upon learning she was chosen for the Carol Los Mansmann Helping Hand Award, Doyle said, "I was honored, moved and really appreciated the fact that some women nominated me."

The award is presented to an individual who embodies the late judge's values and dedication to advancing and improving female lawyers' roles in the legal profession.

Judge Carol Los Mansmann is well known in the Pittsburgh area as a role model – particularly for women in the legal profession. Among her "firsts" in the legal field were being the first female prosecutor in Allegheny County to try, and win, a first-degree murder case and the first woman appointed to the federal bench in Pittsburgh. She died of breast cancer in 2002 at age 59.

Doyle said she knew and admired Mansmann, whom she considered a role model. She described Mansmann as "firm but diplomatic and cheerful" while "operating in a world where the role of women in the legal profession had not been really established."

Doyle said she also has tried to be an advocate for women.

Shortly after Doyle joined the Pennsylvania bar in 1975, one of her early cases was working with the American Civil Liberties Union to sue the Bethel Park School District, which wouldn't let the female president of the Key Club go to a state conference. The judge ruled in favor of the student, who was able to attend the conference, Doyle said.

Women can bring a different perspective to the legal profession and government because "women bring different experiences to the law," she said.

PHOTO BY ERIKA SCHNEIDER

For her steadfast fight to promote equality and in recognition of her dedication to mentoring young attorneys, Ellen Doyle is being honored with the WLD's 2017 Carol Los Mansmann Helping Hand Award at Hotel Monaco next week.



They are more likely to "see" issues related to sexual abuse, domestic abuse and employment discrimination, she said.

Doyle said she feels privileged to be involved in the Women's Law Project, a statewide organization devoted to protecting and advancing the rights of women and girls.

"We do wonderful things to try to protect women's rights and to stand up for women," Doyle said.

While the situation for female attorneys has improved since she was a young lawyer, Doyle said, work still needs to be done.

"I'm disappointed that while there has been significant progress, I feel like we still have not gotten parity," she said.

Quintarra Morant, secretary of the WLD, said Doyle deserves the Carol Los Mansmann award "because of her consistent dedication to addressing gender inequality in the legal profession" and because she "encourages the younger female attorney to make their voices known, as well."

"She refuses to just remain on the sidelines; instead she confronts, educates, and advocates for change," Morant said.

"She does much of the work without seeking recognition, and her passion just comes through whenever her voice is needed on the various issues that have been facing the legal community. I, personally, like that even when all the hype died down, she continued to remind us that the work was not done." ■