



Fall 2012

bliss lawyers bulletin

Attorney Spotlights

David O.: David became a happy bliss lawyer in 2011.

What David Does: David is a corporate transactional attorney with a New York-based financial services company. It turns out that the company liked David so much that after seconding him as an employee of bliss lawyers, they hired him as a permanent employee.

Previous Experience: David brings 14 years of experience to bliss lawyers. He previously served as an associate at a large NYC-based law firm. David has also worked at a magazine publishing company in New York, serving as corporate counsel and secretary to the board of directors.

More About David: David was born and raised in the Napa Valley in Northern California but has adopted New York City as his home. He enjoys travel and speaks Portuguese, Spanish, and French.

Alan G.: Alan joined bliss lawyers in 2012 as a corporate transactional attorney for a healthcare company.

What Alan Does: Alan drafts and negotiates corporate, software, and related agreements and assists with litigation for the company.

About bliss lawyers

bliss lawyers is a new legal model combining the benefits of secondment and virtual firms. With a national network of over 10,000 lawyers, we are placing top-tier temporary lawyers with in-house legal departments. A virtual platform allows us to pass considerable cost savings on to our clients while providing generous compensation and benefits packages to our lawyers. bliss lawyers is a certified women's business enterprise.

Tracking Legal Trends

With cost-conscious companies increasingly turning to legal secondment and other alternative legal staffing solutions to reduce their legal spend, legal secondment continues to be a rare glimmer of hope for attorneys in an otherwise dim legal environment. Here are some notable highlights and headlines that bliss has been following.

Report: Law Firms Struggling to Keep Up With Rising Expenses

Am Law Daily, September 17, 2012

[Am Law Daily](#) reports on a survey that found that expenses are rising faster than revenue at the nation's largest law firms, and that those in charge of the firms are running out of ways to manage the imbalance.

The survey gathered input from 115 firms on a variety of performance-related categories covering the period from January through June. According to the survey, reining in costs continues to be a major concern across the industry. Collectively, revenue rose three percent among the survey's responding firms in the first half of 2012, compared to the same six-month period last year. Because of rising expenses, in large part, profits fell 0.7 percent and in many cases, firms moved to strengthen their balance sheets last year by deferring expenses into 2012. How firms handle expenses and collections remains important because there are few indications that demand for legal services will pick up between now and 2013.

Even with the amount of work coming in at fairly stagnant levels, firms have been able to generate some additional money by raising their rates. According to the survey, rates were up about 3.7 percent on average in the first half of the year. The average hourly

Previous Experience: Alan brings over 25 years of experience to bliss lawyers. He started his career at a top global law firm before moving on to a major media and entertainment company. As a lawyer with his own practice, Alan appreciates the flexibility that bliss provides as he transitions his practice from one area to another.

More About Alan: Alan lives on Long Island with his wife and four children.

Upcoming Events

Comeback Moms: How to Re-Enter the Working World, October 16th, Main Line School Night, Ardmore, PA, [To register.](#)

The Future of Legal Recruiting & Talent Management, November 29th, Law & Reorder, New York, [To register.](#)

Best Law Firms for Women Career Accelerator Summit & Gala Awards Event, December 5th, Working Mother & Flex-Time Lawyers, New York, [To Register.](#)

Pick Me: Critical Self Promotion Skills for Rainmaking, Dec. 6th, American Bar Association Women in Law Leadership Academy, San Francisco, [To register.](#)

rate being billed by attorneys across all levels at the surveyed firms was \$560.

Law Firm Consultant Predicts 'Absolutely' More Layoffs and as Many as Five BigLaw Dissolutions

ABA Journal, September 6, 2012

The *ABA Journal* [reports](#) on a recent [survey by Citi Private Bank](#) that found that law firm expenses are growing faster than revenues during the first half of the year. The decline is being led by a drop-off in corporate work, including in Silicon Valley, which was a bright spot until Facebook's IPO tanked. According to one law firm consultant, large law firms are pinched by companies demanding lower fees and by the slowdown in corporate deal activity. The result: more law firms are looking to lay off poor performing partners and associates and reduce their attorney and staff overhead. According to the consultant, it wouldn't be surprising if there were more than one significant merger by the end of the year. The consultant goes on to say that three to five AmLaw 200 firms could fail by the end of next year unless they improve their financial performance.

In the News

When the Work-Life Scales are Unequal

New York Times, September 1, 2012

bliss lawyer co-founder Debbie Epstein Henry was quoted in a page-one *New York Times* business section [article](#) on changes in attitudes about work-life balance and flexibility in the workplace. According to the article, "the pursuit of 'work-life balance,' which sounds so wholesome and reasonable, can be a zero-sum game in the office. In theory, flextime seems like an everyone-wins proposition. But one person's work-life balance can be another's work-life overload. Someone, after all, has to make that meeting or hit that deadline. As a result, many Americans who work for companies that embrace flexible hours are confronting a sort of office class warfare. Some employees have come to expect that the demands of their children, in particular, will be accommodated - and not all of their colleagues are happy about it."

According to bliss' Debbie Epstein Henry, colleague resentment is very common. "It's the reason that a lot of work-life balance programs fail. . . . In an ideal world, no one else is saddled with more work if their colleague works a reduced schedule."

Why Women Still Can't Have It All

The Atlantic, July/August 2012

bliss lawyers' Debbie Epstein Henry is also quoted in a much talked about recent article in [The Atlantic](#). According to the article, "In her book *Law and Reorder*, published by the American Bar Association in 2010, [Epstein Henry] describes a legal profession 'where the billable hour no longer works'; where attorneys, judges, recruiters, and academics all agree that this system of compensation has perverted the industry, leading to brutal work hours, massive inefficiency, and highly inflated costs. The answer - already being deployed in different corners of the industry - is a combination of alternative fee structures, virtual firms, women-owned firms, and the outsourcing of discrete legal jobs to other jurisdictions. Women, and Generation X and Y lawyers more generally, are pushing for these changes on the supply side; clients determined to reduce legal fees and increase flexible service are pulling on the demand side. Slowly, change is happening."

New Opportunities

If you are a business interested in learning more about bliss lawyers and its services, email us at: gberger@blisslawyers.com.

bliss lawyers is always looking for experienced lawyers and legal professionals. If you are seeking an opportunity to do challenging legal work in an in-house legal department on a temporary basis, with the possibility of converting your engagement into permanent employment, then [join our team](#).

We are seeking to fill a number of in-house counsel positions. bliss has opportunities for lawyers in various practice areas, including corporate, litigation, compliance, licensing, M&A, trusts & estates, intellectual property, and real estate and with experience in numerous industries, including financial services, communications, technology, media, R&D, healthcare, energy, and consumer products. Positions vary from part-time to full-time and typically last from six months to more than a year, with some of the positions converting into permanent employment. The ideal applicant is well credentialed, with a combination of large law firm and in-house experience and graduation from a top national law school. Please email your resume to info@blisslawyers.com.

From the bliss lawyers co-founders



Deborah Epstein Henry



Suzie Scanlon



Garry Berger



bliss lawyers ...it's not an oxymoron

