



NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT LAWYERS ASSOCIATION
2017 EXECUTIVE BOARD ELECTION

CANDIDATE'S STATEMENT

Charlotte Fishman (California)

Date of admission to practice: **1979**

Your present position: **Attorney, Pick Up the Pace**

Size of your firm: **1 attorney**

Year you became a NELA member: **2001**

Name of NELA Affiliate(s): **California Employment Lawyers Association**

What percentage of your professional legal work is devoted to the representation of employees and/or their interests? **100%**

I am running for a third (final) term as a NELA Board member because these are challenging times for an organization devoted to the protection of civil and employment rights of American workers.

NELA is a healthy, vibrant organization with an engaged membership and a dedicated staff. It has been an honor to serve on the Board for the past six years. Yet this next period in our history presents unique challenges, both internal and external.

Finding a successor to retiring Executive Director Teri Chaw and managing a smooth organizational transition with an Interim Executive Director will be a high priority matter for the Board. The fact that it will be taking place against a background of national angst about the Trump administration's agenda and the specific concerns of the NELA membership relating to rollback of worker protections, makes for a particularly challenging time for our organization. I believe that my past Board service will enhance my ability to engage in the transition process, as well as the fact that I served as the interim legal director of a San Francisco legal nonprofit during a period of organizational transition, and understand the complexity of managing relationships.

I love the NELA community. It is filled with smart, hard-working, and dedicated employment lawyers who, in addition to representing clients, step forward to join committees, engage on The NELA Exchange to answer each other's questions, create training programs to mentor newer attorneys and sharpen skills for experienced ones, develop cutting edge legal strategies and share them with others, vet candidates for judicial appointment, analyze and lobby for or against legislation, and many other activities. We have been a force for increasing diversity, including professional diversity, on the federal bench, and that work must continue.

I have been involved in my local affiliate (CELA) and NELA activities over the years, including writing *amicus* briefs, organizing and presenting panels on stereotype, implicit bias, and gender discrimination, attending Lobby Days, and serving on NELA's Affiliate Relations and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committees. I was co-chair of the Hidden Bias Task Force that worked with the Honorable Bernice B. Donald to develop training to help federal judges understand and evaluate stereotype evidence in



employment discrimination cases, and have been a co-convenor of NELA and CELA seminars on Stereotype and Hidden Bias.

At the Affiliate level, I am a member of CELA's *amicus* committee, and I co-founded CELA VOICE www.celavoice.org, a blog "promoting fairness and equity in the workplace" that is written and edited by CELA lawyers. This project was inspired by The Op Ed Project, an organization that trains individuals to become "thought leaders" by teaching them how to write powerful opinion pieces that can change hearts and minds. I anticipate that the years ahead will require more NELA members to "speak out" on behalf of our clients, and to become involved in legislative/media advocacy on behalf of employee rights.

I have practiced plaintiff-side employment discrimination law for over 30 years, working as a staff attorney for the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing, in private practice, and as Director of the Higher Education Legal Advocacy Project at Equal Rights Advocates. NELA has been and continues to be an inspiring community for me. I would be honored to serve a final term on the Board to help build NELA's future.