

Women Trial Lawyers Caucus Spotlight

Get to know members of the NJAJ Women Trial Lawyers Caucus.

The WTLC is spotlighting members.

Meet Alea K. Roberts, Esq.

Alea is a litigation attorney at Gair, Gair, Conason, Rubinowitz, Bloom, Hershenhorn, Steigman & Mackauf, where she specializes in personal injury, medical malpractice, labor and construction law, false arrest and malicious prosecution and general negligence. She is dedicated to advocating for her clients through all stages of litigation to ensure that they obtain the relief to which they are entitled.

Before joining the firm, Alea was an agency attorney intern with the New York City Administration of Children's Services, Family Court Legal Services. There, she handled Family Court Act Article 10 child neglect matters in New York Supreme Court and the Appellate Division.

As the first lawyer in her family, Alea recognizes the responsibility that she has to future black attorneys, to mentor, support, and uplift them on their legal journeys. When she isn't advocating for clients, she serves as the secretary on the Executive Board of Black JD, Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing law school preparatory resources and ensuring readiness for black and brown students committed to obtaining a Juris Doctorate degree.

Alea received her bachelor's degree from Fairleigh Dickinson University, cum laude and earned her Juris Doctorate from New York Law School, Evening Division.

Q. What year did you join NJAJ?

A. I joined NJAJ in January of 2022.

Q. Why did you join NJAJ?

A. When I joined Gair, Gair, Conason, Rubinowitz, Bloom, Hershenhorn, Steigman & Mackauf, in January, 2022 my bosses told me that NJAJ was one of the best organizations for New Jersey trial lawyers and suggested I join. As a litigator, I am always seeking opportunities to network with and learn from trial experts so joining NJAJ made sense.

Throughout the year I have had the opportunity to meet some of NJAJ's members. I appreciated that most of them were funny, which we know for lawyers is rare. More importantly, I appreciated the stories they had to share. It's those stories from tenured lawyers, that teach young lawyers like me.

Q. Why did you become involved in the WTLC?

A. I joined the WTLC because as a black woman, I understand that the perception of women lawyers is different than our white male counterparts. I was seeking a community that not only understood how I felt but was continuously working to improve the legal profession for all women. The WTLC was that space for me.

I recently attended the WTLC Wellness Day Down the Shore and was amazed by how kind and welcoming the women were. The yoga and meditation were so informative, and the networking lunch felt like a vacation. WTLC is invested in its members as well as the legal community and that is why I chose to get involved.

Q. Who is your favorite fictional legal character?

A. Elle Woods from Legally Blonde. Throughout the movie everyone underestimates her ability to gain admission into law school, but she did. Once admitted, people doubted her ability to succeed in law school. At one point Elle even doubts herself, and her ability to thrive in an unfamiliar, competitive environment. Yet, with a little help from great friends and self-encouragement, Elle proved them all wrong. Moreover, she looked the best doing it. I am personally a huge fan of pink suits in courtrooms.

I can also relate to being underestimated as a black woman in law school and now as a black attorney in the courtroom. I can relate to that moment of self-doubt and that feeling of not being good enough. Nevertheless, with faith in God, family, and great friends, I continue to prove to naysayers that I deserve to be here, just like Elle did.

Q. What is your favorite vacation spot?

A. My favorite vacation spot is Mexico, specifically Tulum. It takes a special kind of city to make you feel luxurious in the middle of the jungle. The locals are so sweet and invested in making your experience a memorable one. The food is as fresh as it is delicious. If you love to get up and move like me, you will dance all night. I also love Tulum because I get to practice my Spanish.



Alea K. Roberts, Esq.

Auto Case Mock Trial Offers Glimpse into Jury Deliberations

Oftentimes, lawyers wonder how a jury arrived at its verdict and never have a good opportunity to find out.

The [Live Jury Trial of a Verbal Threshold Case](#) program at the [Meadowlands Seminar 2022](#) on Thursday, November 17, will allow attorneys to see a live jury discuss the case and render a verdict.

"We will run a live stream of the jury during the deliberations and the lawyers attending can see and hear what motivates the jury and what they feel may have been unimportant," said Lauren D. Fraser, Esq. who will facilitate the 45-minute jury deliberation.

Fraser, who conducts focus groups for attorneys across the country, said she will push to elicit reactions and explanations from the jurors. "It's important for lawyers attending to see what evidence the jurors view as meaningful and more importantly, what they decide to disregard and not consider important," she said. "We don't have a lot of time for deliberation, so I will try to keep the conversation focused.

"My role is to get the jurors to talk and explain how and why they are reacting the way they do," she said. "My job is not to encourage them to go in any particular direction, but rather to encourage them to discuss their thought process, such as whether certain evidence was understandable."

Facilitating a jury is a variation on the types of focus groups Fraser has been conducting for her cases and for attorneys around the country for more than a decade.

"Usually, we do this earlier in the process, such as during discovery, to get a better idea of what evidence we need to produce or to help determine the weaknesses of our cases as well as the strengths," she said. "It may sound strange, but in a focus group it's good to lose because you learn more about your case that way."

The [Live Jury Trial of a Verbal Threshold Case](#) program is one of 20 programs being offered at the [Meadowlands Seminar 2022](#) takes place Wednesday – Friday, November 16 – 18 at the Hilton Meadowlands Hotel in East Rutherford, NJ.

You can [register online at the NJAJ website](#).