

# CWBA Honors Elizabeth A. Starrs with the 2009 Mary Lathrop Award

by Carey Christie, Professional Advancement Committee Co-Chair

The CWBA is pleased to announce that Elizabeth A. Starrs has been selected as the 2009 recipient of the Mary Lathrop Award. The Mary Lathrop Award, the CWBA's highest honor, is presented annually to recognize a female trailblazer who has substantially impacted the Colorado legal profession. Recognized as one of Colorado's leading complex civil litigation lawyers, it is with great admiration that the CWBA recognizes Liz with this year's Mary Lathrop Award.

Liz received a B.A. from the University of Michigan and J.D. from Suffolk University Law School in Boston, Massachusetts. Currently, Liz is a founding partner and principal of Starrs Mihm & Pulkrabek LLP, a boutique litigation firm in Denver, Colorado. In 28 years of practice, Liz has extensive trial experience in state and federal court cases involving complex commercial litigation and professional malpractice matters. As a member of the American Arbitration Association, she also acts as a mediator and arbitrator in similar types of disputes. Previously, Liz was an Attorney/Shareholder and President with the law firm of Kennedy & Christopher P.C. and began her legal career as an Associate Attorney with the firm of Denner & Benjoya in Boston, Massachusetts. She is admitted to practice law in the states of Massachusetts and Colorado.

Liz Starrs has been an active member of the CWBA since 1983. She served as the Public Policy Chair from 1984-1985 and as Vice-President from 1988-1989. In 1999-2000, she served on two committees for the CWBA. Liz served as the CWBA Foundation President from 1992-1994 and is a current CWBA Foundation Board member where she is taking over as Chair of the "Raising the Bar" dinner for 2009. From 1989 until 2006, she wrote the "As Told by the Starrs" column for the *Advocate* which provided humor and updates on important milestones reached by CWBA members.

Liz has been an important and consistent sponsor of CWBA events. Her current firm has been one of the top sponsors of the CWBA which includes sponsorship of the CWBA convention and the CWBA Foundation "Raising the Bar" dinner. Additionally, her previous firm, Kennedy & Christopher P.C. sponsored various CWBA events. She has also helped support funding for the CWBA lobbyist throughout the years.

Liz has always been an outstanding and ardent supporter of the CWBA and women lawyers. She will always take a call from any CWBA member who seeks support and she makes herself available to all CWBA members. She insists that her

law firm pay the membership dues for lawyers in her firm who want to join the CWBA, and actively urges attorneys and staff in her firm as well as attorneys she meets through activities and mentoring to join the CWBA. Liz not only encourages attendance of the annual CWBA convention, but members of her firm are regularly present at the convention.



Liz Starrs

Liz has been a preeminent civil trial lawyer in Colorado and has been recognized by trial organizations such as: the American Board of Trial Advocates, where she served as President; she was only the third Colorado woman inducted into the American College of Trial Lawyers; and she is the only woman from Colorado inducted into the exclusive International Academy of Trial Lawyers. She is the second woman to be President of the Colorado Chapter of the American Board of Trial Advocates and is a member of the Faculty of Federal Advocates. She started a Women Litigators Support Group with Lynn Feiger in the mid 1990s, which lasted several years. Liz is the 4th woman to be President of the Colorado Bar Association and has served as President of the Denver Bar Association. She has served on the ethics panel for the Colorado Federal District Courts and served on a jury reform panel for the Colorado Supreme Court. Liz was a member of the Judicial Nominating Commission for the Second Judicial District of Colorado from January 1, 2000, until December 31, 2005. Currently, she participates in Our Courts, a joint activity of the Colorado Judicial Institute and Colorado Bar Association, to provide nonpartisan information programs to audiences around the state to further public knowledge and understanding of the state and federal courts in Colorado.

Her other volunteer, pro bono, and community service activities include being a member of the Career Advisory Board for the Florence Crittendon School (a Denver public school for pregnant and parenting teenagers) and Business Leaders of America. She has been a Girl Scout Leader. Liz also has extensive community involvement through her work with the Colorado Bar Association and Denver Bar Association.

Liz has been a trailblazer in the legal community and within the CWBA itself. Because of women like Liz, the CWBA makes a substantial impact and contribution to the Colorado legal profession. She is a constant supporter and contributor to the CWBA and the Colorado legal profession. Congratulations to Liz Starrs on being the 2009 recipient of the CWBA Mary Lathrop Award. She truly is a "star among stars," and it is a privilege to distinguish her with the CWBA's highest honor. ♦