

Women's leadership summit inaugurated in Philadelphia

To round out a successful term as AAJ's fourth female president, Kathleen Flynn Peterson instituted a women's leadership summit and presided over its first meeting at the annual convention in Philadelphia.

"Last summer, I wrote in my *TRIAL* column about how we can change the future of our profession. I appealed to both men and women to join ranks in the fight against gender bias," Peterson wrote to AAJ members to introduce the idea. "Teaching by example, sharing experiences, being an advocate—[these are] things we all can do to ensure that talented and determined women in our profession have every opportunity to achieve success in their careers. Most importantly, we can learn from each other."

More than 60 women attended the one-day event to hear women leaders share their experiences and motivate listeners to become leaders in their profession and at AAJ.

Speakers included Dr. Arin Reeves, founder of the Athens Group, a consulting firm specializing in diversity

strategies for the legal profession, and Mary Jane Volk of EMILY's List, the political network that helps elect pro-choice Democratic women candidates to office.

In addition, a group of women lawyers who have risen through the ranks at AAJ in different ways participated on a panel moderated by former president Roxanne Barton Conlin. Each talked about how she got involved and answered questions from participants. Panel members included former AAJ president Mary Alexander of San Francisco; Mary Alice McLarty of Dallas; Mary Beth Ramey of Indianapolis; Elise Sanguinetti of Walnut Creek, California; and Rhonda Hill Wilson of Philadelphia.

A reception after the day's program allowed participants to connect and talk further. The strong attendance and participants' positive feedback has prompted AAJ to make the summit a biannual event, alternating with Women's Lobby Day on Capitol Hill.

