

Family Law Section Names Rising Stars

By Barry Armata



Back row: from left, Anthony Cenatiempo (Stamford); Alexander Cuda (Westport) Front row: from left, Sandi Girolamo (West Hartford); Leslie Jennings-Lax (New Haven), and Keenan-Marie McMahon (Stamford and Greenwich).

Following the Connecticut Bar Association president's suggestion to help grow future leadership in the CBA, the officers of the CBA Family Law Section met and decided to create and name five "Rising Stars." The goal of the Rising Stars program is to invigorate the Family Law Section's efforts and to promote individuals who are seeking to raise the level of family practice and give back to the field, its practitioners, and the community. In determining a Rising Star, the officers looked for a group of talented up-and-coming family lawyers who have demonstrated commitment towards and an interest in the advancement of the family law field and who would also agree to take on the added responsibility in helping the section fulfill its missions and projects.

The Family Law Section officers also looked at individuals who had shown a commitment to the CBA through either their work in the section, the Young Lawyers Section, or other worthwhile endeavors. The first class of Rising Stars are as follows: Anthony Cenatiempo, Alexander J. Cuda, Sandi B. Girolamo, Leslie I. Jennings-Lax, and Keenan-Marie McMahon.

Attorney Anthony Cenatiempo is a member of Palmer Cenatiempo LLC in Stamford. He is currently the co-chair of the Family Law Section for the CBA's Young Lawyer Section and he is also actively involved in the CBA Family Law Section and

the Fairfield County Bar Association. Attorney Cenatiempo devotes a substantial portion of his practice to family law.

Attorney Alexander J. Cuda is an associate at Rutkin and Oldham LLC where he practices solely family and matrimonial law. Attorney Cuda is not only active in the CBA Family Law Section, but he is also part of the committee working to pass legislation to revitalize Connecticut's family law arbitration statute. Additionally, he has co-authored articles that have been presented at the annual seminar of the Connecticut Chapter of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers and at an annual meeting of the International Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers.

Attorney Sandi B. Girolamo is a partner at O'Connell Flaherty & Attmore-West LLC where she practices almost exclusively in family law cases, representing parents and children. For three years, Attorney Girolamo sat as the co-chair of the Family Law Section for the CBA's Young Lawyers Section, and she currently sits on the Development and Gala Committees for the Children's Law Center. Attorney Girolamo also sits as a Special Master in several Judicial Districts and has chaired several seminars on family law topics.

Attorney Leslie I. Jennings-Lax is an attorney at Rubin & Eldrich PC where she practices in the areas of family law and fam-

ily appellate law. Attorney Jennings-Lax is an active member of the CBA's Family Law Section, the Board of Editors for both the *Connecticut Family Lawyer* and the *Connecticut Bar Journal*, and the Policy Board of the Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund. In addition, Attorney Jennings-Lax has written a number of articles and lectured on topics related to lesbian and gay issues in the law.

Attorney Keenan-Marie McMahon is an associate in the law firm of Cacace Tusch & Santagata where she focuses her practice in the area of family law. Attorney McMahon serves as Senator Andrew McDonald's designee to the Commission for Child Support Guidelines, and she is an active volunteer at the Stepping Stones Museum for Children in Norwalk. Attorney McMahon is also active in the CBA Family Law Section and the Fairfield County Bar Association.

The Rising Stars are excited about their selection and expanding their involvement in the Family Bar in order to continue their work and commitment to enhancing the practice of Family Law. In addition, the officers and Stars look forward to working together to expand the membership of the Family Section and to cultivate future leaders for the Family Bar. **CL**

Attorney Barry Armata is a partner at Brown Paindiris & Scott and chair of the CBA's Family Law Section.