Proskauer

Proskauer Mourns the Passing of Betsy Plevan

October 29, 2021

The Proskauer family is deeply saddened by the passing of our dear friend and partner, Bettina (Betsy) Plevan. Betsy was a beloved member of our community for almost 50 years. Betsy was an extraordinary person and practitioner, and blazed a trail for so many of us in myriad ways. In fact, in her early days at Proskauer, Betsy started her parade of firsts at the firm by being one of the first female associates in memory not only to play on the firm's softball team but to hit a grand slam home run while doing so.

Betsy gave her utmost to her clients, to our firm and to our profession. She has made an indelible impression on generations of Proskauer lawyers.

She was promoted to partner in 1980 and was the first female partner in her department. Betsy served two terms on the Proskauer Executive Committee and was the first woman ever to serve on that committee. Betsy was an outstanding mentor to younger lawyers, setting an example of working hard, striving for excellence and balancing the demands of that hard work with devotion to, and care of, her family.

Betsy was responsible for many noteworthy cases – creating precedent and setting legal standards nationwide. She received many public accolades and lifetime achievement awards, including the James Duane award (for exemplary service given by SDNY Bar and Bench), and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Lawyer. She was a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers.

In addition to maintaining her active practice, Betsy was a shining example of Proskauer's commitment to public service. She served as the second female president of the New York City Bar Association from 2004-2006, President of the Federal Bar Council, a member of the ABA Board of Governors from 2006-2009, chair of the American Bar Association's Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary from 2013-2014, co-chair of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights, long time Chair of the SDNY Magistrate Selection Committee and a member of Senator Schumer's judicial selection committee. Betsy is the paradigm of what we aspire to be as lawyers and people.

We all extend our deepest sympathies to Betsy’s beloved husband, Ken, their son and daughter in law Rabbi William Plevan and Sara Shapiro Plevan and their grandson, Ariel. Betsy was pre-deceased by Betsy and Ken’s son, Jeffrey Barasch Plevan, who passed in 2013. May her memory be a blessing.