



Perspectives Elizabeth Hernandez, President

CONSUMER ATTORNEYS ASSOCIATION OF LOS ANGELES

Why Women's History Month matters to CAALA

IT IS A COMMITMENT FROM ALL OF US – WOMEN AND MEN ALIKE – TO BUILD A PROFESSION WHERE EVERY LAWYER HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO SUCCEED



As we rise together to meet the challenges of today, it is equally important that we pause to honor the values and voices that strengthen our community, especially as we celebrate Women's History Month. Women's History Month is a time to reflect on the extraordinary contributions women have made to our nation, our profession, and our pursuit of justice.

For CAALA members, this month is more than a symbolic celebration. It is a reminder of the progress we have fought for, the barriers we continue to dismantle, and the responsibility we share to ensure that the legal profession becomes more inclusive, equitable, and representative of the communities we serve.

Women's History Month invites us to look back with gratitude and forward with purpose. It challenges us to recognize the women who paved the way in the courtroom, in the Legislature, and in our own association. It also calls on us to continue building a profession where women lawyers – especially women of color, lawyers with disabilities, and members of the LGBTQ+ community – can thrive, lead, and shape the future of civil justice.

Honoring the trailblazers who opened doors

The history of women in the law is a story of persistence. For generations, women were denied entry into law schools, courtrooms, and bar associations. Those who broke through did so with courage and resilience, often facing hostility, exclusion, and systemic bias. Their victories were not just personal achievements; they were collective breakthroughs that expanded opportunities for all who followed.

Within CAALA's own history, women leaders have played a transformative role. They have strengthened our committees, elevated our advocacy, and expanded our vision of what justice requires. Their leadership has shaped our conventions, our educational programs, and our legislative priorities. Women have been central to CAALA's growth, its voice, and its impact.

Women's History Month gives us the opportunity to honor these trailblazers, not only by remembering their achievements, but by continuing the work they began.

Recognizing the realities women lawyers still face

While we celebrate progress, we must also acknowledge the challenges that remain. Women lawyers – particularly women of color, LGBTQ+ women, and women with caregiving responsibilities – continue to face disparities in pay, promotion, courtroom opportunities, and leadership representation. Bias, both explicit and implicit, still shapes how women are perceived, evaluated, and treated in the legal profession.

For trial lawyers, these challenges can be even more pronounced. Women are still too often underestimated in the courtroom, interrupted during argument, or judged more harshly for the same advocacy techniques that are praised in their male counterparts. These inequities are not abstract, they affect careers, case outcomes, and the clients we serve.

Women's History Month is a reminder that equity is not self-executing. It requires intentional action, structural change, and a commitment from all of us – women and men alike – to build a profession where every lawyer has the opportunity to succeed.

Looking ahead: Building the future we want

Women's History Month is not only about honoring the past, but also about shaping the future. As CAALA members, we have the privilege and responsibility to build a legal community where women are fully represented, supported, and empowered.

This month, let us celebrate the women who changed the course of history. Let us uplift the women who are leading today. Let us commit to creating a profession where the next generation of women lawyers – our future trial lawyers, judges, legislators, and CAALA presidents – can rise without barriers.

Women's History Month is a reminder that progress is possible, but only when we pursue it together. In CAALA, together is exactly how we lead. 