

Message from the Presidents

Happy summer! We are writing to give you an update on all of the amazing work we have been doing over the past few months and to let you know what is on the horizon. As you know, ABB was founded five years ago by former colleagues, who, in successfully working together to advance women's rights and combat poverty, came to recognize the centrality of work and family issues to economic justice for all, especially low-income workers.

Today, A Better Balance is the leading legal team helping American workers get the time and flexibility they need to care for their families. We strive to change workplace attitudes and policies in the United States, helping to balance the demands of employment and home, and ensuring the work of caring for our families is recognized in law and policy.

As you will see below, we have been very busy. We know you will enjoy reading all of the updates on our work. It is because of your support that this work is possible and for that we thank you.

We hope you enjoy the rest of your summer, and we look forward to keeping you up to date on A Better Balance.

Dina & Sherry



Co-Founders Sherry Leiwant, Dina Bakst and Yolanda Wu with gala honorees Wayne Outten and Jennifer Buffett.

Victory, Veto and Vigilance

A Better Balance has been hard at work nationwide providing legal support for paid sick days campaigns, and there is a lot of success to report. On June 4, 2011, we celebrated as Connecticut became the first state in the country to pass legislation ensuring that many workers in the state will be able to take paid time off to recover when they are sick or to care for a sick family member. Then on June 16, 2011, the Philadelphia City Council voted to make their city the fourth in the country to guarantee paid sick days for its residents. A Better Balance has been supporting Philadelphia advocates since the beginning, working with the City Attorney to ensure that Philadelphia had the power to pass this law, drafting the initial proposal and serving as legal counsel as the campaign moved forward, and consulting on a continual basis as legal issues arose and amendments were proposed. Unfortunately, on June 28, 2011, Mayor Nutter vetoed the Philadelphia paid sick days bill but there will be an override effort in the fall and the Philadelphia Earned Sick Days Campaign has pledged to continue their fight. In Denver, advocates have gained the requisite number of signatures to place the paid sick days bill that ABB helped draft on the ballot this November. As in Philadelphia, the campaign for paid sick days in Denver started with ABB's legal research and moved forward as ABB helped to draft their bill and research all the legal questions that arose. Next up are Seattle and Massachusetts where ABB is providing legal support and assistance to campaigns for paid sick days that appear likely to succeed.

Families @ Work Legal Clinic

As you may know, A Better Balance, in conjunction with Outten & Golden LLP, founded a free legal clinic in 2009. The clinic serves family caregivers and pregnant women by providing advice and counseling about their workplace rights. Since January 2011, our clinic has served over 30 individuals facing problems at work due to their family responsibilities.

One of these people is a single father who was demoted to a lower-paying shift at his job as a security guard after he took leave to care for his ailing mother. He struggled to keep his family afloat while on unpaid leave and, with help from the clinic, is fighting for his original shift and rate of pay to be restored.

This fall we plan to launch a referral network for our clinic so we can continue to expand its impact and help even more family caregivers in need.

We're Fighting Wage Secrecy in New York

Fair pay is critical to family economic security. Unfortunately, in New York City, a female full-time worker in the for-profit sector earns only 71.5 cents for every dollar her male counterpart earns. Pay confidentiality policies, which are widespread in the private sector, bear some of the blame. According to a 2010 study, 61% of private sector employees said they are discouraged or prohibited from discussing wage and salary information. But if a woman doesn't know how much her male colleagues earn, how can she know if she is a victim of pay discrimination?

New York can change this! State Senator Liz Krueger has introduced a bill to encourage wage transparency and combat discrimination by prohibiting retaliation based on wage disclosure. A Better Balance was instrumental in getting this bill introduced.



Working moms & caregivers need to know

Breastfeeding has significant health benefits for both mothers and babies. Unfortunately, too many women, especially low-income mothers, stop breastfeeding sooner than they would like to, or never get started, due to real and perceived workplace barriers.

New York has one of the strongest laws in the country guaranteeing nursing mothers reasonable break time at work so they can express milk for their babies. But not enough women know about this law, and how it can help them meet their responsibilities at work and their need to feed their children.

ABB hopes to remedy this problem by educating new mothers about their rights. We are reaching out to over 150 medical providers and community groups who serve pregnant and new mothers to expand awareness of these women's rights at work. Our public education focuses on pregnancy discrimination, the Family and Medical Leave Act and the right to pump breastmilk at work. In partnership with the U.S. Department of Labor, we're also conducting extensive public education to inform all caregivers about their rights under the FMLA.

In the News and On the Ground

Over the past few months, A Better Balance has been in attendance and participated as a key player in various work/family conferences across the country.



White House Forum on Workplace Flexibility

ABB played a significant role in planning the New York portion of the National Dialogue on Workplace Flexibility: Challenges and Solutions for Professional Workers. At the June forum in New York City, we moderated a break-out session, The Business Case: Profitability, Competitiveness and the Bottom Line, where employers and business owners shared best practices on making flexibility work.

National Partnership/Family Values @ Work Conference

ABB moderated a panel on compromises in the fight for paid sick days and a lunchtime table discussion about involving the LGBT community in paid sick days campaigns at the national conference attended by over 200 activists from around the country.

Caring Across Generations

In July, ABB helped launch Caring Across Generations, a national campaign to transform long-term care in the United States. The campaign was officially launched July 12 at The Care Congress, a one-day town hall meeting in Washington, DC, which brought together over 700 caregivers. ABB is a part of the leadership team of this growing campaign, and will continue to work with a diverse coalition in a broad movement to create quality, dignified care for all.

In addition to being on the ground at these conferences, A Better Balance has made a splash in the media with our two newest reports. Our first report is *Beyond the Breadwinner: Professional Dads Speak Out on Work and Family*. This report clearly shows that work-family challenges are not just a women's issue; three out of four fathers surveyed are worried that their jobs do not allow them to be the kind of dad that want to be, and more than half say it is a source of frequent stress. The report's findings drive home that family-friendly workplace laws and policies are critical for all workers, as men and women alike struggle to meet the dual demands of work and home.

The second report, *A Work-Family Agenda for New England & The Nation*, came out of a regional meeting on work-family issues held in Portsmouth, NH. ABB and several other like-minded organizations hosted the meeting and the report captures many excellent ideas generated during the meeting's discussions. The report includes an overview of the work-family care crisis in New England, proposed solutions to the problem, and a blueprint for a regional strategy. We hope that this document can be a useful tool for building regional work-family coalitions, engaging businesses, and pitching policymakers on the need for family-friendly policies that better support working families.

For access to the full reports please visit our website at www.abetterbalance.org

We're Growing

In March, we welcomed our first development staff person. Jackie Stoll joins ABB as Director of Development and brings with her over 10 years of fundraising experience. Jackie most recently held positions with the NYCLU and Girls Incorporated and, as the mother of 3-year-old twins, fully understands the need for work/life balance.

We also would like to extend a warm welcome to Elizabeth Gedmark and Meredith Appel. Elizabeth, a recent graduate of NYU Law, will join ABB in September as a Law Fellow, and Meredith has joined ABB as our part-time bookkeeper. We are extremely excited to have both of them on board and know they will both contribute significantly to our success.

We are thrilled to report, due to the generous support of our funders and donors, our most recent NYU Law Fellow, Jared Make, will join ABB in a permanent capacity as of September 1st. Jared, who has been with ABB since August of 2010, will now take on the role of Staff Attorney. We're also thrilled to report that Phoebe Taubman is now a Senior Staff Attorney.

Just recently, Yolanda Wu, our Co-Founder and Co-President, resigned from her position. Yolanda is leaving her full-time position to pursue her personal goals as a violinist and will continue teaching law at NYU. While we were sad to see her leave our staff, we are so thrilled that Yolanda will be joining the ABB Board of Directors in the fall.

Please consider making a gift today to help A Better Balance continue to advance policies to support working families. Your donation of any amount makes the work of ABB possible – and we deeply appreciate your support. Your donation can be mailed to ABB Attn: Jaclyn Stoll, 80 Maiden Lane, Suite 606, New York, NY 10038 or please contact Jaclyn at 212-430-5982 for more information on ways to give.



Happy Anniversary

On May 2nd over 150 friends and supporters joined ABB to celebrate 5 years of success at the Gansevoort Park Avenue. The evening's honorees included Wayne Outten, founding and managing partner at Outten & Golden LLP, Jennifer Buffett, President and Co-Chair of the New York based NoVo Foundation, and Kirsten Gillibrand, U.S. Senator for New York. The event was a truly memorable occasion and a huge success, raising over \$40,000 for the organization.

SAVE THE DATE

ABB CELEBRATES

May 9, 2012

GANSEVOORT PARK AVENUE