

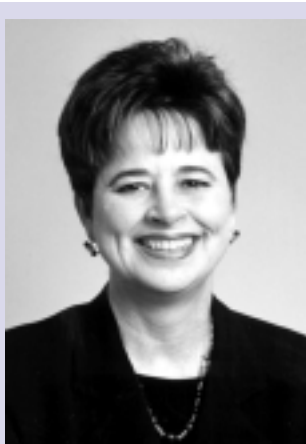
# FAWL Rosemary Barkett Outstanding Achievement Award

by SIOBHAN HELENE SHEA  
FAWL President  
and WENDY S. LOQUASTO  
FAWL Assistant Historian

The FAWL Rosemary Barkett Outstanding Achievement Award is an annual award presented by FAWL for the following two purposes: 1) to recognize the outstanding achievement of women who have promoted the status of women in the community and the profession, and 2) to recognize FAWL members from all walks of life who have been particularly successful in overcoming stereotypes and making their mark as women attorneys. **Martha W. Barnett** richly deserves the honor of receiving the 2002 Rosemary Barkett Award.

President **Siobhan Shea** presented the award to Martha for her dedicated service and commitment to equality and protecting human rights. The presentation took place at FAWL's annual luncheon on June 21, 2002, during The Florida Bar's annual meeting in Boca Raton. The sellout crowd in attendance included bar leaders, members of the judiciary, the Virgil Hawkins Florida Chapter of the National Bar Association, and the Equal Opportunity Section of The Florida Bar.

Martha's career has been an inspiration to women lawyers over the last 29 years. After obtaining a Bachelor of Arts degree



*"Do not be afraid to  
be referred to as a  
'woman lawyer.'"*

—Martha Barnett

in 1969 from Newcomb College, Tulane University of Louisiana, she received her juris doctor degree from the University of Florida, graduating in 1973. She is a member of Phi Kappa Phi and Phi Delta Phi, and was an editor of the University of Florida Law Review.

In 1973, Martha became the first woman employed by the national firm Holland & Knight LLP. She is the firm's first woman partner, the first woman to serve on its Directors Committee, and the first woman to chair the Public Law Department, one of Holland & Knight's firm-wide departments.

In 1994, Martha became the first woman to chair the American Bar Association's policy-making House of Delegates, of which she had been a member since 1984. She served on the ABA Board of Governors from 1986 to 1989, and again from 1994 to 1996, and she has chaired a number of other ABA entities. She rose to the top of the ABA in 2000, when she became the second woman to lead the ABA as its President.

In Florida, Martha has served on the executive councils of The Florida Bar's Tax Section and the Public Interest Law Section, and she is a Past President and former member of the Board of Directors of the Florida Lawyers Prepaid Legal Services Corporation. She serves on the Board of Trustees of Florida TaxWatch, and was Vice Chair of the Florida Sales Tax on Services Study Commission. She has been a Governor's appointee to a number of statewide commissions, and she recently served on Florida's Constitution Revision Commission and was instrumental in the adoption of the Basic Rights Amendment, which guarantees equality to women under Florida law.

Martha has also been active in various women's organizations, including FAWL and Tallahassee Women Lawyers. She is a founding member and Past President of the Capital Women's Network and a founding member of the Board of Directors of the Florida Women's Alliance. She participated in the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China, in 1995.

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## Kelly Overstreet Johnson to Receive 2003 Award

**Kelly Overstreet Johnson** will receive the 2003 Rosemary Barkett Outstanding Achievement Award on Friday, June 27, 2003 at the Orlando World Center Marriott.

The award will be presented at the joint luncheon sponsored with the Equal Opportunities Law Section of The Florida Bar and the Virgil Hawkins Florida Chapter National Bar Association.

She is a partner in the Tallahassee office of Broad & Cassell where she is a member of the firm's Commercial Litigation and Dispute Resolution and Labor and Employment Practice Groups.

Overstreet Johnson is President-elect designate of The Florida Bar and served as a member of the American Bar Association's House of Delegates from 1992 to 1994. She is a member and Past-president of the Tallahassee Bar Association and Tallahassee Women Lawyers. ■



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She has received numerous awards for her contributions to society and the legal profession, including the 1996 Arabella Babb Mansfield Award from the National Association of Women Lawyers, and the 1996 Hillary Clinton Glass Cutter Award. She was named to the *National Law Journal* list of "The 50 Most Influential Women Lawyers in America" in 1998. Martha was a recipient of The Florida Bar Foundation Medal of Honor Award in 2002.

Martha Barnett cares deeply about civil rights, as evidenced by her work on the Rosewood case, which arose from the 1923 massacre of a mostly African-American town near Gainesville by a white angry mob. Martha was instrumental in successfully representing the survivors before the Florida Legislature in 1994 in a claims bill request, and ultimately the case demonstrated how governments can, years after an incident, symbolically apologize for terrible racial injustice. Through her efforts, the survivors not only received compensation for their lost property, but a scholarship fund was also established with a preference for descendants of Rosewood residents. The case won Holland & Knight the ABA's Pro Bono Publico Award.

An interesting personal note to this case surfaced after Martha began working on it and discovered that her father, a country doctor, had treated many of the Rosewood survivors who had escaped to her hometown Lacochee on the night of the massacre. The survivors had remained silent about the massacre

for over 50 years, and meeting people who were a part of her childhood and being able to help them was a deeply rewarding personal experience for Martha.

All of these accomplishments show that Martha Barnett is a bright, hard-working, dedicated lawyer, as well as person devoted to public service. But there is more to Martha than her professional life. She is also a loving wife and mother. She met her husband, architect Richard "Rick" Barnett, on her first day of college in 1965 and they have been together ever since—married for 34 years! They have two children, 28-year old Richard and 22-year old Sarah. Martha believes that the hardest thing she has done is raise her children. She gives much credit to her husband, declaring she could never have done what she has without him.

In accepting the award, Martha stated, "The Rosemary Barkett award has special meaning to me, because it is named for someone I much admire." Her advice to women: "Do not be afraid to be referred to as a 'woman lawyer.'" She believes there is a commonality among women. Our history in the legal profession is more recent than our male counterparts; we face challenges that men do not, especially balancing our professional and personal lives and child-rearing responsibilities. Women need ongoing supportive groups like FAWL and Tallahassee Women Lawyers. She also stresses that women need to mentor and reach out to one another. Barnett firmly believes that she would not be where she is today without the women lawyers who came before her. ■

The Rosemary Barkett Outstanding Achievement Award will be presented at the Joint Awards Luncheon on Friday, June 27, 2003. See Page 4 for ticket information.

BROAD AND CASSEL  
CONGRATULATES  
KELLY OVERSTREET JOHNSON  
2003 RECIPIENT OF  
THE ROSEMARY BARKETT  
OUTSTANDING  
ACHIEVEMENT AWARD.



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