

MIDYEAR 2010 SOUTH FLORIDA LEGAL GUIDE WOMEN IN LAW



ADELE I. STONE: **Giving Back to the Community**

Adele I. Stone always knew she wanted to be a lawyer. "I had an uncle who was an attorney in Manhattan and I admired his intellect and was fascinated with the matters he handled," she says. "I never considered anything else for my career."

Today, Stone is managing shareholder at Atkinson, Diner, Stone, Mankuta & Ploucha, P.A., in Fort Lauderdale and a versatile real estate and business attorney. "I enjoy both the intellectual challenges and the opportunities to give back to the community," she says. "As a lawyer, every day is different."

As a girl growing up in South Florida, Stone learned important lessons in life from her mother and grandmother. "They empowered my sisters and me to make choices and to think independently," she recalls. "My parents taught by example." After graduating from Hollywood Hills High School, Stone earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Florida and her law degree from the University of Miami in 1978.

Board-certified in real estate, Stone has remained busy throughout the ups and downs of the marketplace. "I love to negotiate and close deals," she says. "But as with all transaction lawyers, my practice has shifted somewhat and I am also involved in workouts and general troubleshooting for clients - not surprising in these challenging economic times."

Stone also has an active business practice, including the structuring of new entities, preparation of business agreements and asset-based transactions. In addition to the real estate and business practice, Stone is also an arbitrator with the American

Arbitration Association, and finds that the practice of law enhances her arbitration skills and her role as an arbitrator enhances her law practice skills.

A long-time leader in Florida professional and community organizations, Stone was elected 2009-2010 president of The Florida Bar Foundation, a statewide philanthropic organization that funds non-profits serving individuals who cannot afford civil legal services, including Florida Children First, a statewide advocacy organization and the Innocence Project. She is also a founding member and past chairperson of the Executive Council of Legal Aid Services of Broward County/ Coast to Coast Legal Aid of South Florida.

This year, Stone is president-elect of the Florida chapter of NAIOP, a national commercial real estate development association. She also chairs the steering committee of "FASH," the Florida Bar/ Florida Bar Foundation sponsored statewide pro bono program that represents homeowners under threat of foreclosure, and is a member of the Executive Council of the Florida Bar's Real Property Probate and Trust Law Section.

She and her husband and law partner Jesse Diner, who is The Florida Bar president, recently established the New Beginnings Educational Endowment at Jewish Adoption and Foster Care Options (JAFCO) to help pay college expenses for teenagers in foster care in honor of Stone's sisters and brothers-in-law who have provided homes for foster children. "I believe education equals opportunity," says Stone. "These children have experienced trauma in their lives and deserve to have a real choice about education."

In 2009, Stone received a remarkable string of awards for community service:

- The Russell E. Carlisle Advocacy Award from Legal Aid Services of Broward County, Inc., which goes to an attorney whose career, has exemplified a commitment to the poor and to public interest work.
- The Annual Service Award from the Real Property Probate and Trust Law Section of the Florida Bar.
- The Justice Harry Lee Anstead Award for Board Certified Lawyer of the Year
- The G. Kirk Haas Humanitarian Award, which was presented by Florida Bar President John G. White, III.

Looking ahead, Stone plans to continue the active pace of her practice and community activities, while enjoying travel with her husband.