

CELEBRITY SPEAKER ROBIN GIVENS



Robin Givens is currently one of the stars of the ABC series *Twisted*. She began her acting career with an appearance on *The Cosby Show*. The following year, she landed her breakthrough role as Darlene Merriman on the hit ABC series *Head of the Class* (1986-1991). During that time she co-starred with Oprah Winfrey in the miniseries *The Women of Brewster Place* (1989). Givens then starred in several back-to-back movies including a critically

acclaimed starring role in *A Rage In Harlem* (1991) with Forest Whitaker, Danny Glover and Gregory Hines; *Boomerang* opposite Eddie Murphy (1992); *Foreign Student* (1994); *Blankman* with Damon Wayans and David Alan Grier (1994). More recently, Givens returned to films working with Tyler Perry on his *The Family That Preys* (2008), with Kathy Bates and the TBS series *Tyler Perry's House of Payne*, as well as a recurring role on USA Network's *Burn Notice*. In 2011, Givens starred in recurring guest star role on the hit series *Chuck* in its final season, as well as guest star roles on the CW's *Nikita*, Lifetime's *Drop Dead Diva* and BET's *Reed Between the Lines* with Malcolm-Jamal Warner. She has worked extensively on stage including a successful stint on Broadway in the leading role of Roxie Hart in the Broadway production of *Chicago* (2006) and has performed in the Off-Broadway production of *The Vagina Monologues* (2006). In 2007, she published her first book, *Grace Will Lead Me Home*. She recently garnered rave reviews for her starring role in the acclaimed production of *Blues for an Alabama Sky* opposite Kadeem Hardison and Kevin T. Carroll at The Pasadena Playhouse under the direction of Artistic Director Sheldon Epps. This year, Givens starred on the CW hit series *90210* in its final season. She went immediately from her appearances on *90210* into work on the new ABC series, *Twisted*. She is co-chair of Women Who Care.

LEAP FOR JUSTICE AWARDS DV LEAP'S TENTH ANNIVERSARY TOP TEN

Jo-Ann Armao, a member of the *Washington Post* editorial board, is the first representative of mainstream print media to expose the failure of family courts to protect at-risk children. She penned a series of editorials on the tragic death of one-year-old Prince McLeod Rams, bringing into public focus the difficulties and lethal risks faced by children and their protective parents in family court litigation with an abusive parent. Such scenarios are at the core of DV LEAP's work, and avoiding the mistakes made by some trial courts is a fundamental goal of our training and appellate efforts. Ms. Armao also provided significant news coverage of the national Battered Mothers' Custody Conference (BMCC) hosted this year by DV LEAP at The George Washington University Law School. Most recently, Ms. Armao and the Post editorial board wrote about a sex offender who has unsupervised access to his child, despite the mother's appropriate concerns. For raising the visibility of family court failures to protect children from abuse, and elevating awareness among the public and on Capitol Hill about this typically silenced problem, DV LEAP is proud to recognize Jo-Ann Armao as our *DV LEAP Journalist of the Decade*.

Candida Hartly is an associate at Arnold & Porter. Candida is receiving the *Associate of the Decade* award for her extraordinary dedication in her pro bono appellate advocacy for a DV LEAP client who was fighting to protect her children after a disastrous family court ruling. The case proved to be the most demanding in DV LEAP's 10-year history. The trial itself took more than 4 years, involved in the area of 16 separate expert opinions and reports, several thoroughly briefed interlocutory appeals, and a 120-page judicial opinion. For the three years of work on the appeal, Candida researched and briefed multiple complex issues in two substantive briefs and several in-depth motions, combed through boxes of case material that rose halfway up an entire conference room wall, and supervised creation of a first-of-its-kind, 800-page appendix summarizing the extraordinary number of expert opinions. Presented with an opportunity to ethically bow out, Candida demonstrated her concern for both the client and the issues by promising the client she would stay with her and take the case to the next level, if necessary. Candida provides a model for dedication, persistence, and loyalty for lawyers at all levels.

Bingham McCutcheon LLP has supported DV LEAP's mission in many ways, with many talented lawyers. Before joining DV LEAP's board, David B. Salmons—partner and chair of the firm's Appellate Practice Group—led the charge on an important state court appeal, as well as DV LEAP's third Supreme Court amicus brief. The latter was a critical confrontation rights case in which a batterer had murdered his victim, rendering cross-examination impossible. The sophisticated arguments

Bingham made in this important brief were mirrored in several of the divided court's opinions and helped bring balance to a problematic legal doctrine on the defendant's right to confront the witnesses against him. In addition to David's success in a Colorado protective parent appeal, he and colleague Randy Levine are now advocating for a same-sex victim of sexual assault in the D.C. Court of Appeals. Demonstrating important support for the full range of activities of DV LEAP as a nonprofit organization, Bingham has offered much-needed corporate assistance on a pro bono basis, as well as continuing and substantial financial assistance. Bingham is truly a *DV LEAP Firm of the Decade*.

Crowell & Moring LLP could be called DV LEAP's "founding firm." Susan Hoffman, Crowell's Public Interest Counsel, advised DV LEAP's founder, Joan Meier, when DV LEAP was little more than a gleam in Joan's eye. Susie chaired DV LEAP's first very small board in 2004, along with Joan Meier and continuing board member Anne Spielberg, and she continued as chair for well over half of DV LEAP's first decade. Crowell has handled several DV LEAP pro bono appeals, both locally and elsewhere the country, including one of DV LEAP's earliest major victories on behalf of an abused woman who was re-victimized by the court's entry of a protective order against *her* for "provoking" the abuser's violence. Thanks to Crowell's superb work with DV LEAP on the appeal, the D.C. Court of Appeals reversed the decision and established a powerful precedent against future judicial victim-blaming. Crowell caps its multi-faceted partnership with DV LEAP with financial contributions that have steadily supported DV LEAP's work since its inception. We could not be more grateful and are proud to count Crowell as a *DV LEAP Firm of the Decade*.

Hogan Lovells LLP wins the prize for "most diverse pro bono contributions" to DV LEAP. First Hogan partners Cate Stetson and Jessica Ellsberg spearheaded an eloquent and effective Supreme Court amicus brief. Other Hogan lawyers then devoted countless hours to thoroughly researching and improving the citations that support DV LEAP's proposed concurrent resolution "Safety First for Abused Children of Divorce," now circulating on Capitol Hill. Still more of the firm's legal talent assisted DV LEAP in updating our highly-valued digest of domestic violence cases in the D.C. Court of Appeals, relied on by the D.C. domestic violence community. Most notably, Hogan's venerated legislative partner, Ray Calamaro, has provided elegant, wise, and extraordinarily generous pro bono leadership for DV LEAP's efforts on Capitol Hill, producing one of the most significant advances yet. Thanks to Ray, a federal bill is about to be introduced concerning the unintended destructive consequences for abuse victims of the Hague Convention on International Civil Abduction. With deep gratitude for its support on these diverse legal—and financial—fronts, we add Hogan Lovells to the roster of *DV LEAP Firms of the Decade*.

Jones Day has provided consistently topnotch advocacy in some of the most difficult cases in this already-difficult arena. Some of the hardest appeals DV LEAP

handles involve protective parents appealing an unfavorable decision giving an abusive father custody or unsafe access to the children. These cases are difficult for pro bono lawyers because they are often fact and expert intensive in ways not amenable to traditional legal challenges. Some firms decline to attempt such cases, but not Jones Day. Partner Kerri Ruttenberg—a former star student of DV LEAP founder Joan Meier—challenged the legality of the D.C. court’s appointment, without legal process, of a “parenting coordinator,” which forced an abused mother to sit next to and “cooperate” with her abuser concerning the children, and to deny the significance of the father’s past abuse both for her and her children. Other firm attorneys in California mastered and powerfully challenged the somewhat technical and sometimes complicated pseudo science being used against many protective mothers in a case where young children were at profound risk from their fathers. Their brief is now being used as a template by DV LEAP in similar cases. For the superb advocacy and unwavering dedication of its lawyers in these difficult and critical cases, as well as their financial support, we are pleased to name Jones Day a *DV LEAP Firm of the Decade*.

McDermott Will & Emery LLP’s partnership with DV LEAP provides bookends to DV LEAP’s first decade. McDermott lawyers handled DV LEAP’s first Supreme Court brief back in 2004–5, in a widely-known case, *Town of Castle Rock v. Gonzales*. The facts of the case exemplify the fates that can await inadequately protected children of abuse. Castle Rock police failed to respond to a father’s violation of a protection order. He snatched his three daughters from their front yard one evening, and by the end of the night all three girls were dead in his truck. McDermott’s superb lawyers helped DV LEAP make a name for itself in the Supreme Court by producing a powerful brief on behalf of several national law enforcement associations, explaining why the Castle Rock Police Department’s rationalizations for its failure to enforce the protection order were invalid. Since that early measure of superb support, McDermott has provided ongoing support in the form of Senior Counsel Tim Waters’ constancy and wisdom on DV LEAP’s board and through financial contributions. Today, we celebrate DV LEAP’s tenth anniversary in their beautiful new quarters. We thank the firm for its significant role in our development by naming it a *DV LEAP Firm of the Decade*.

Morrison & Foerster LLP has been a close friend to DV LEAP for many years, having twice provided superb briefs in the Supreme Court, involving two very different issues. The first addressed the important question of when and how a domestic violence victim may enforce her own protection order through criminal contempt. The firm’s expert and collegial partnership with DV LEAP took full advantage of DV LEAP’s founder’s experience with the issue in lower courts and prior scholarship and produced an ideal blend of a strong voice for domestic violence survivors within a powerful Supreme Court doctrinal framework. In its second and recent Supreme Court brief, the firm has taken on a very different, but highly

important, issue under the Hague Convention on International Civil Abduction, arguing that a mother and child who flee an abuser across national borders should not be penalized for purportedly “concealing” their whereabouts when any such concealment was for safety reasons. For building DV LEAP’s name and credibility in the Supreme Court by its expert advocacy, and even more for bringing that advocacy and power to bear on behalf of domestic violence survivors, as well as its leadership level of financial support for DV LEAP, we express our continued thanks with a *DV LEAP Firm of the Decade award*.

Joyanna Silberg, PhD, is an icon in the world of protective parent advocacy, and she has lent her incredible expertise, dedication, and profile to partnerships with DV LEAP. A clinical psychologist who serves as the Senior Consultant for Childhood Trauma at Sheppard Pratt Hospital in Baltimore, Joy is the leading mental health expert in the country on the misuse of psychology in family court proceedings involving abuse and children at risk. Joy also possesses remarkable communication skills, which are equally effective in a courtroom, a judicial training, or a public presentation. By partnering her Leadership Council on Child Abuse and Interpersonal Violence with DV LEAP under DV LEAP’s grant from the U.S. Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women, Joy has brought invaluable expertise and presence to our trainings for judges, lawyers, and other players in court adjudications of custody where children are at risk of abuse. Equally critical has been her cutting-edge research into “turned around” cases, those in which one court refused to believe allegations of abuse and ordered the child into the abusive parent’s care, but a second court recognized the abuse and corrected the error. Joy’s research is building ironclad empirical support for DV LEAP’s efforts to teach trial courts to stop relying on pseudo science and to understand the realities of abuse dynamics in families. Those who work on behalf of protective parents agree that Joy simply must be cloned. For now, DV LEAP recognizes Joy’s game-changing work by naming her *DV LEAP Child Champion of the Decade*.

Michele Weldon’s amazing book, *I Closed My Eyes*, has transformed understandings of what it is like to live through domestic violence. Her eloquent and riveting depiction of the inner and outer life of a strong, accomplished, caring mother in an abusive relationship shows the confusing inconsistency of an abusive partner’s behavior, the practical and psychological costs of leaving an abuser, how abusers extend their abuse to make their victims suffer inordinately even after separation, how the legal process can both help and hurt, and why the right services for survivors and their children are so powerful and so critical. Michele’s book is regularly used as a text for students by DV LEAP’s founder and has been transformative even for longstanding domestic violence experts. DV LEAP has not worked directly with Michele, but for producing some of the best writing we have found on domestic violence she has won our gratitude, our respect, and our award as *DV LEAP Author of the Decade*.