



Even in Retirement, Mar Makes an Impact In Legal Community

By Cynthia Kincaid

When Patricia Mar, '69, graduated first in her class from McGeorge School of Law, she did so when few women were even attending law school. "There weren't many women graduating from law school at that time," she says. "It was about five years before it became a critical mass."

Despite being female, Mar says she wasn't treated differently from her male counterparts: law school was tough for men and women. "I didn't have any sense of being different because I was a woman," says Mar. "There were other women in my class then, there just wasn't 50 percent like there is now."

Before attending Pacific McGeorge, Mar made her living as a newspaper reporter and thought those skills would transfer to law. "You have to be analytical and logical, you have to be a decent writer, and you have to be able to spot the issues," she says. "I thought my personality and skills would fit."

After graduating, Mar went back to San Francisco where she clerked at the California Court of Appeal for two years. In 1971, she took a position with Feldman, Waldman & Klein, a downtown San Francisco law firm, where she remained for 28 years practicing bankruptcy and business litigation law. "I liked the firm, I was doing well at the firm, and I saw no reason to leave," she says. "I very much liked bankruptcy work, so I started concentrating on that, but it's cyclical, so when bankruptcy business was down, I would go back to general business litigation."

When Feldman closed its offices in 1999, Mar moved to Morrison & Foerster, LLP, also in San Francisco, for the last seven years of her career.

Retired in April 2007, Mar is a docent at the San Francisco Zoo and at Alcatraz Island. She also serves on the board of directors for Self-Help for the Elderly, a San Francisco-based nonprofit that runs programs and provides services for senior citizens. She is also learning Mandarin.

Mar recently gave financial gifts to Pacific McGeorge and to the Bar Association of San Francisco Foundation's Bay Area Minority Law Student Scholarship Program. "The gifts were specifically directed toward the minority scholarship program because certain underrepresented minorities need to be encouraged to become lawyers for the benefit of us all," she says. "I think it's a very important goal for the legal profession."