Thank You to Our Chairs!
Family Law Section Past Chairs

**Term of Service:** 2012-2013

Carin M. Porras  
Fort Lauderdale

“Serving as chair of the Family Law Section provided me the opportunity to serve Florida’s families and to promote professionalism through the hard work and diligent efforts of the section’s Executive Council and committee members. The 2012-2013 bar year was challenging and intense, while also rewarding and memorable.”

**Term of Service:** 2011-2012

David L. Manz  
Marathon

“To paraphrase Ken Kesey – You don’t lead by pointing and telling people some place to go. You lead by going to that place and making a case. Regarding crafting equitable distribution bills, defending our alimony statute, and leading the Section, I hope I did that.”

**Term of Service:** 2010-2011

Diane M. Kirigin  
Delray Beach

“I had the honor and privilege of chairing the Section during the 2010 – 2011 bar cycle. During that year the Section focused on “Building Better Relationships” within and outside of the Section. I am proud of all the things we accomplished during that year and the efforts expended by general membership who worked on the standing and substantive committees, as well as the Executive Council and Executive Committee without whom those accomplishments would not have happened. I have fond memories of the retreats in Hammock Beach, Key West and Napa Valley. Most importantly, however, are the acquaintances I made and the friendships fostered, furthered and reinforced during that and subsequent years.”

**Term of Service:** 2009-2010

Peter Gladstone  
Fort Lauderdale

“My experience as Chair of the Family Law Section was truly the culmination of years spent on the Executive Council doing good work for the families of our state and for the family law practitioners of our state. More than anything though, it is the relationships that I built with so many other hardworking and caring members of the Section from all across Florida that have lasted and, I am certain, will last long beyond my time in office.”

**Term of Service:** 2004-2005

Evan Marks  
Miami

“The theme for the year I was Chair of the Section was “Fundamental Fairness for Florida Families.” I was so proud of my Executive Council who unanimously voted to take a stand and seek to lobby against the Statutory Ban on Gay Adoption. It is not that we were ahead of our time, it is just that “time” has finally caught up to us!!!!”

**Term of Service:** 2003-2004

Richard West  
Orlando

“I have always believed that to lead is to serve. It was my privilege to be chosen by my peers to serve the Family Law Section.”
Term of Service: 2002-2003
Caroline Black Sikorske
Tampa

“For me, the most enjoyable part of being Chair of the Family Law Section of the Florida Bar were the relationships that developed with family lawyers all over the State. Both as friends and as experts in their field, these people really made a positive difference in my career.”

Term of Service: 2001-2002
Norman D. Levin
Longwood

“Serving as the Chair of the Family Law Section allowed me to develop the trial of the 21st century and to assist in the direction of family law in the State of Florida. The 2002 Bar year was challenging as we were going through structural changes in the Section. I enjoyed this experience as I made life-long friends.”

Term of Service: 2000-2001
Jeffrey Wasserman
Boca Raton

“I am proud having been Chair at the Millenium. I have very fond memories of what was accomplished, not because of me, but as a result of all of those people who helped me. My greatest regret is that Matt Miller is not here to add his comments. He is dearly missed.”

Term of Service: 1999-2000
Ky M. Koch
Clearwater

“I made some lifelong friends, learned a hell of a lot, and had some great times.”

Term of Service: 1997-1998
Deborah Marks
Miami

“Being Chair of this Section was a marvelous opportunity to work with fabulous people, and to constructively shape the law through legislative action and necessary reworking of Rules. And, we had fun too!”

Term of Service: 1996-1997
Martin “Guy” Haines
Lake Park

“As chair I was able to interact with dedicated professionals from all walks of life whose diverse fields of interest allowed meaningful exchanges as we endeavored to improve the practice of marital and family law. The results had impact which I will always remember.”

Term of Service: 1990-1991
Ira Abrams
Delray Beach

“I was both fortunate and proud to have been able to successfully argue in the Supreme Court for the establishment of a Family Court, a goal that had been sought by the Section for years. Helping to level the playing field in family law cases for litigants and their children fills me with a sense of gratitude that I was given the opportunity to serve.”

Term of Service: 1987-1988
Maurice Jay Kutner
Miami

“Being chair meant assuming the responsibility of making sure that the committees and programs were as active and productive as possible. The most meaningful part of my experience as chair was earning the respect of my peers.”
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| **Miriam E. Mason**  
Tampa                     | **Melvyn B. Frumkes**  
Miami                   |
| “I became Chair June 1986. It was a time that others wanted to figure out what to call me – Chairman, Chairwoman – what?? The FLS was my first experience with Bar work – I literally grew up in the FLS – and made lasting friends around the state with great lawyers. It was an invaluable personal experience.” | Mr. Frumkes was in the hospital when we asked for his summary of his time as Chair of the Family Law Section. He was e-mailing from the hospital to ensure that we had a photograph and some details of what he accomplished during his time as Chair. While Chair, among other things, he instituted the newsletter which was the forerunner of the Commentator. He also started the retreats for the Section. He will be greatly missed. |

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| **Brenda M. Abrams**  
Boca Raton              | **Arthur D. Ginsberg**  
Sarasota                  |
| “I was deeply aware that what we did as a Section could make a difference to the children of divorced parents, and we needed to get it “right.” I dedicated my efforts and those of the Section to prioritizing the rights and needs of those who were the most affected by divorce and the least represented: the children.” | “I was the Family Law Section’s second chair, following Jim O’Flarity of Fort Lauderdale, now deceased. The main effort of the section was to establish “Equitable Distribution” as the law of Florida. I was a volunteer lobbyist for the section for seven years. There was always some powerful member of the legislature who was thinking about, or in the middle of, a DOM. Realizing the futility of getting the new law through the Florida legislature, the Florida Supreme Court established Equitable Distribution in the Canakaris case, and I stopped lobbying.” |

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| **Stephen W. Sessums**  
Tampa                      |             |
| “It was an exciting time to be Chair in the 80’s as changes were happening that would change family law forever. The Matrimonial Law Commission was formed by the Supreme Court of Florida with Justice Ben Overton as Chair and consisting of 1/2 by Judges and 1/2 by practicing lawyers. The first request to appear as Amicus Curiae in an appellate Court was made. Certification in family law was being developed and presented for approval to the Florida Supreme Court. The Family Law Section of the Bar was at the center of all of this.” |             |