



A Giraffe's been sighted in your territory!

The Giraffe Project, a national nonprofit organization that finds and honors heroes, has commended

Doris L. Sassower of White Plains
for sticking her neck out for the common good.
We invite you to tell her story.

Attorney Doris Lipson Sassower has been named a "Giraffe" for her risktaking civic activism and for founding the Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA), a national nonpartisan, nonprofit citizens' organization. CJA is working to reform the way federal, state, and local judges are selected and disciplined; the organization has members in more than 30 states.

Ms. Sassower stuck her neck out for decades as a pioneer in the women's movement and for family law reform. But her 35-year career at the bar ended after she brought a lawsuit against the two major political parties for their manipulation of 1990 judicial elections in New York State's Ninth Judicial District. As pro bono counsel, she challenged a written judge-trading deal between the parties in which they agreed to cross-endorse seven judicial candidates over a three-year period, required resignations of sitting judges to create judicial vacancies, and pledged to split judicial patronage. Her suit also cited the judicial nominating conventions' violation of Election Law quorum, roll call, and other requirements.

Ms. Sassower paid a heavy price for her reform advocacy and for championing the public interest by this politically sensitive Election Law case. Within days of her announcement that she would take the case to the highest state court, a New York court suspended her law license—without charges, without a hearing, without findings, without reasons, and without any right of appeal. She has been fighting ever since to regain her right to practice her profession: her federal civil rights action against the state court judges who suspended her is soon headed for the US Supreme Court.

Ann Medlock, President of the Giraffe Project, said that the organization was founded 15 years ago, "to overcome apathy and feelings of powerlessness by showing what people with courage and caring can do." In receiving the award, Ms. Sassower said, "The Giraffe Award is a powerful symbol that fortifies me in my challenging of ostrich-like 'leaders' who bury their heads in the sand while the rule of law is being obliterated by those who are part of the political power structure. Citizens care about having an honest judiciary and through CJA are working to make it happen. This award should make politicians realize that reforming the way lawyers become—and remain—judges is a key political issue for 1998." —end—

*There is more information on Doris Sassower's work at <http://www.judgewatch.org>
You can arrange an interview with her by calling 914-997-1677, emailing judgewatch.org
or faxing 914-684-6554.*

For further information about the Giraffe Project, about other Giraffes, about Giraffe speakers, or about Giraffe educational programs, call (360) 221-7989 during west-coast (continental US) business hours or go to <http://www.giraffe.org/giraffe/>

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COMMENDATION

WHEREAS: sticking one's neck out for the Common Good is an inspiration to all;
WHEREAS: such Risk-taking is vital to a compassionate, peaceful and just world;
WHEREAS: The Giraffe Project is commissioned to seek out such Risk-takers
and to Honor them for their deeds;



THE GIRAFFE PROJECT

herewith declares

Doris L. Sassower

TO BE A GIRAFFE

whose courageous actions illumine all our lives
making manifest the Truth
that people who believe in themselves and care for others
can meet any challenge life presents.

Given: October 21, 1997


President