

Robert Lawson — writing sample 3

This is the opening two speeches for an awards banquet held in Washington, DC for the Women's In-House Counsel Leadership Institute. Texts were created following phone interviews with speakers, with follow up conversations and a process of editing. There were two dozen speeches and award presentations in total.

PRE-SHOW

Ppt SLIDE : placeholder, Horizon's Awards logo

Cocktails

On dinner tables : pre-sets water, bread & salad

At cue :

VOG

Ladies and gentleman, please make your way to your tables. Dinner is about to be served.

Dinner music

Once audience is settled :

VOG

Please welcome the executive director of the Women's In-House Counsel Leadership Institute, **Lloyd Johnson**.

WELCOME & ABOUT WIHCL**LLOYD JOHNSON**

Good evening everyone, and welcome to the second Horizon Awards dinner presented by the Women's In-House Counsel Leadership Institute. The Horizon Awards are designed to celebrate the inspiring, impactful achievements of both women and men who are passionate about and committed to increasing the number of women in leadership positions in the legal profession.

We are on the precipice of change as it relates to women in leadership positions in law departments, law firms and beyond. And I'm proud that WIHCL has played a role in that evolution, helping women thrive as leaders and general counsel.

One of my favorite WIHCL initiatives is called Project 20/35 -- the 20 standing for the year 2020, and the 35 for our goal to have 35% of the general counsel in the Fortune 500 be women. I know : it's an ambitious goal. Right now we're at 24% or 124 women in that position, and looked at from one angle, you could say that both mathematics and historical trends are not in our favor. Or - - maybe it's that history needs some prodding.

So let's suspend our disbelief for just a few moments. First, a little bit of history -- remind us where we've come from, and where we find ourselves today.

Ppt SLIDE : montage of images to illustrate --

Prior to 1964, most of the women in the corporate work force were in clerical roles. Between '64 and the late 70's, a number of movements coalesced that transformed society : the civil rights movement, the Vietnam anti-war protests, the counterculture and social revolutions - - notably the women's movement. A major result of that movement was the realization by progressive companies that it made economic sense to allow women to participate in an expanded set of roles traditionally limited to men.

Fast forward to today where we find ourselves at an important inflection point in the movement for equality in the legal profession, a moment in history when it is actually possible to imagine an industry-wide transformation towards systematic, thoughtful, merit-based approaches to developing women leaders.

Look around you. You're surrounded by an extraordinary community : by General Counsel and direct reports in legal departments, by General Counsel for companies in the Fortune 500, and those who aspire to be - - and everything in between. And I'm here to tell you that WIHCL is committed to helping ALL women take their careers in the legal profession to the next level, whatever they choose that to be. WIHCL exists to help : by cementing relationships with other women and men in the profession, and by working to develop curricula and programs in order to grow a community of support that inspires and sustains everyone along their chosen journey.

VIDEO : ABOUT WIHCL**Video plays out**

END OF VIDEO

As applause dies down :

LLOYD

I believe that 35% women general counsel in the Fortune 500 by 2020 is possible.

Because I believe we're in a sea change where women will be promoted based on talent, and where new opportunities are emerging every day. Look at these factors in the marketplace today : we're close to a critical mass of women General Counsel in the Fortune 500. Add to that an ever-growing number of CEOs and General Counsels who are near retirement age, which promises to open up a wealth of opportunities for women to take their seat at the table. And note this little item : 27 current CEOs recently came together around pay equity for women. Now that's what I call a genuine historical moment.

Tonight, we are here to celebrate the achievements of five extraordinary women and men who are accelerating this trajectory of change, and to celebrate the Women's In-House Counsel Leadership Institute which stands at the forefront.

Applause

Now please welcome to the stage, the General Counsel for Cox Enterprises Inc. --
Juliette Pryor.

Lead applause as Juliette takes the stage

Lloyd exits

OPENING REMARKS, RECOGNITIONS**JULIETTE PRYOR**

Tonight we gather to celebrate the accomplishments of colleagues who have gone above and beyond, leading the way in our mission, helping us build a network of in-house women leaders around the country; colleagues who have helped advance and

empower the role of women in the legal profession : the New Girls Network, as we call it, something to stand in powerful contrast to the traditional Old Boys network we're all so familiar with. I see WIHCL and the New Girls Network as powerful tools with which to keep shattering the many glass ceilings out there.

WIHCL not only provides substantial resources for women who are currently GCs in Fortune 500 companies, but to those who one day will be. Substantial resources, not just chatter, but practical advice and mentorship that can be applied to both daily life and the longer arc of our careers -- both for those well into careers, and the next generation of women leaders.

We all know how important it is to get connected rapidly when starting in a new position, to hit the ground running.

Ppt SLIDE : to illustrate the Welcome to Our Town program

The Welcome to Our Town program WIHCL sponsors helps do just that by conducting dinners for general counsels when they move to a new town. And it works. Trust me : I know from personal experience. When I moved from Chicago to Atlanta as the new General Counsel at Cox Enterprises, a dinner was convened with the GCs from Aflac, Home Depot, Peabody and Ingersoll Rand. Talk about getting right to the heart of things. These aren't just meet & greet dinners, these are gatherings that provide insight and illumination, that help us all connect and thrive.

Ladies and gentlemen, now is the time for us to move forward with even more intention, more drive, more faith in ourselves and what we can accomplish.

Applause

Now please allow me to take a moment to recognize the dinner committee members with whom I've had the pleasure of working to make tonight's event a success. Would the members of our 2017 Horizon Awards dinner committee please stand.

CONTINUES

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