

Tax Professors Remember Christine Ann Brunswick

By Paul L. Caron

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Caron shares the tributes posted by tax professors remembering Christine Ann Brunswick, former director of the American Bar Association Section of Taxation, who died last month.

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Christine Ann Brunswick (February 27, 1952-February 25, 2013) was vice president and a member of the board of directors of the National Breast Cancer Coalition. She also served as executive director of the American Bar Association Section of Taxation for over 25 years. Following her death on February 25, many tax professors who worked with Christine over the past 25 years shared their memories of her on TaxProf Blog.

- Alice Abreu (Temple)
- Ellen Aprill (Loyola-L.A.)
- Paul Caron (Cincinnati & Pepperdine)
- Cynthia Lepow (Loyola-New Orleans)
- Francine Lipman (UNLV)
- Roberta Mann (Oregon)
- Deborah Schenk (NYU)

Alice Abreu, *James E. Beasley Professor of Law, Temple University, Beasley School of Law*

Chris was the backbone of the Tax Section. Every Tax Section Meeting at which numerous substantive presentations went off simultaneously and without a hitch while there was ample nourishment for members networking, catching up with friends or just going from one excellent panel to another owed its success to the behind the scenes organizational efforts of Chris and the excellent and dedicated staff she assembled. It's been noted often in these recent sad days that whenever Council, Section Officers, or the Section Chair faced a difficult question, the first

question was always "What does Chris think?" or "Ask Chris". She was highly respected, had a deep devotion to the Section, its work and the tax system and her judgment was always spot-on. The Section owes a lot of its success to her steady hand and unwavering devotion. She has left the organization strong, but she has also left a void.

Chris was also a deep believer in the importance of pro bono and public interest work and in the idea that tax work could be work in the public interest. She was instrumental in the Section's establishment of its Public Interest Fellowship which was modeled on the Skadden Fellowships and which every year continues to fund the work of two Public Interest Fellows for two years. The Fellows have brought tax representation to underserved populations of taxpayers from Appalachia to Brooklyn and Illinois to Maine and even to rural Pennsylvania. All of the taxpayers who have been helped by the Fellows owe that help to Chris's advocacy and support. She did the hard, tedious, but essential work of putting



ABA Tax Section

Christine Ann Brunswick, executive director, American Bar Association Section of Taxation

the proposal together, obtaining ABA approval, figuring out payment and actually making the program happen and thrive. Chris also helped develop the Section's Pro Bono Staff Counsel and has nurtured the talented young people who have served in that capacity. Their work, under Chris's guidance, has allowed Section members to expand dramatically their participation in VITA programs and to bring their expertise to an increasing number of military bases throughout the country. None of that would have happened without Chris's passion, leadership, and commitment.

Chris also loved life. She was a strong woman whose style and panache attracted others to her and made them want to do their best work for her. She was decisive without being abrasive while also being great fun. She ran the Marine Corps Marathon, traveled extensively, knew her food and wine, and loved her son Daniel without reservation. She fought cancer like a lion while working with the National Breast Cancer Coalition to help save the lives of other women. She was a role model to many of us and she will be very deeply missed. I was lucky to have known her and to have learned from her.

Ellen Aprill, *John E. Anderson Professor of Tax Law, Loyola Law School, Los Angeles*

In my years as an officer and council director for the ABA Tax Section, I had the good fortune to work frequently with Chris Brunswick. Seldom have I met someone with such a degree of practical wisdom and good judgment. Her advice as to what would work and what would not — as well as why a particular path would be preferable — always hit the mark. Her good humor never failed, even in trying professional circumstances, much less in the personal challenge she faced in battling her illness. I remember her with both affection and admiration.

Paul Caron, *Charles Hartsock Professor of Law, University of Cincinnati College of Law; and D&L Straus Distinguished Visiting Professor of Law, Pepperdine University School of Law*

Although I did not know Chris well, I found her invariably cheerful and helpful whenever I contacted her. Several times she helped me navigate my way through the ABA Tax Section.

Cynthia Lepow, *Professor of Law, Loyola New Orleans College of Law*

I have looked to Chris to be enthusiastic about ways to encourage pro bono participation by section members. She was especially helpful when I

started to produce videos for lawyers working with moderate-income taxpayers. Most of all, she was fun to know and to work with.

Francine Lipman, *William S. Boyd Professor of Law, UNLV William S. Boyd School of Law*

Christine Brunswick was "the change she wanted to see in the world." She was a world-class community organizer in the best sense and a tireless advocate for progress in healthcare for women as well as for pro bono tax services for underserved communities. Her leadership in the Section of Taxation for the American Bar Association led the organization to focus resources on among other accomplishments, two annual public service tax fellowships, an in-house pro bono tax counsel position, enhanced pro bono outreach and support, especially for members of the armed services and unrepresented individuals before the Tax Court, and more education and assistance for low-income taxpayer advocates and clinics. In addition, she served as a role model of leadership. She was dedicated, brilliant, and bold, but always elegant and ready to smile and enjoy the journey. While Christine Brunswick left the world in a much better place than when she arrived, we will miss her amazing grace.

Roberta Mann, *Frank Nash Professor of Law, University of Oregon School of Law*

Although I didn't know Christine well, she was always helpful when I needed assistance in navigating the intricacies of the ABA meeting process. And she always greeted me with a warm smile. Perhaps when things move smoothly, it's hard to appreciate the work behind the scenes. I know she will be missed.

Deborah Schenk, *Marilynn and Ronald Grossman Professor of Law, New York University School of Law*

I was active in the ABA Tax Section for many years. It did not take me long to discover that, despite the participation of many very smart and talented tax lawyers Chris Brunswick was the glue that held the Tax Section together. She knew everything about the Tax Section. She knew everyone in the Tax Section. She knew how to get anything done in the Tax Section. Even though she was a force to be reckoned with, Chris was always cheerful. Her greatest legacy, however, has nothing to do with tax or the ABA. I am confident that there are countless women all over America — many of them tax lawyers — who get a mammogram every year because Chris insisted that they do so.