

Greenbaum Rowe Atty On NJ Bar's LGBTQ Rights Chair Role

By **Nick Muscavage**

Law360 (June 22, 2022, 3:55 PM EDT) -- Greenbaum Rowe Smith & Davis LLP partner Emily A. Kaller was recently sworn in as the chair of the New Jersey State Bar Association's LGBTQ Rights Section, and she's planning on using the role to promote cultural competency throughout the state's legal industry.



Emily A. Kaller

Kaller, who has worked at Woodbridge, New Jersey-based Greenbaum Rowe for more than two decades, focuses her practice on commercial litigation.

She handles financing, credit and other banking matters, and has experience with contract disputes, particularly those arising under licensing and asset sale agreements, environmental contamination actions and complex litigation. Kaller's practice also includes class action litigation in matters involving consumer claims, alleged securities fraud and personal injury.

"I am deeply honored to have been appointed as chair of the NJSBA LGBTQ Rights Section," Kaller told Law360 Pulse on Tuesday, adding that she is joining "many talented lawyers who are involved in shaping and developing law and policy to protect and advance the rights of LGBTQ individuals."

As the new chair of the association's LGBTQ Rights Section, which has 136 members, Kaller said she will address issues that are important to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in the legal

profession, and work on "the cutting edge development of law impacting the LGBTQ community."

The section aims to advocate for the civil and human rights of the LGBTQ community, and strives to improve access to justice for LGBTQ individuals. Additionally, Kaller will also work to help advance professional opportunities for LGBTQ attorneys and judges. The LGBTQ section comments on new legislation, confers with legislators and provides testimony before the state Legislature.

Kaller, who graduated from The New School for Social Research and received her law degree from Rutgers Law School, is admitted to practice in New Jersey and New York, as well as the federal courts for the District of New Jersey and the Southern and Eastern districts of New York. She is also admitted to the Third Circuit.

The LGBTQ Rights Section isn't the first time Kaller has held a leadership role in a professional organization. She is the immediate past president and board of trustees chair of the Trial Attorneys of New Jersey and a past chair of the state bar association's Women in the Profession Section. She's also a member of the Association of the Federal Bar of New Jersey and the Middlesex County Bar Association.

Kaller was sworn into her post as the state bar association's LGBTQ Rights Section chair May 19, and Greenbaum Rowe highlighted her new role in an announcement made Tuesday.

Law360 Pulse spoke to Kaller to learn more about what she has planned for the bar association's LGBTQ Rights Section. This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

What goals do you have in this new role?

My goal for this year is to provide my support — and the support of my firm — to the many talented lawyers in the LGBTQ Rights Section as they continue their important work of promoting the inclusion of all members of the LGBTQ community by promoting cultural competency and defending and advancing the rights of LGBTQ individuals. This goal is important to me individually and to the New Jersey State Bar Association as a whole, because ensuring that all individuals are afforded basic human rights is at the core of our legal system.

It is incumbent upon members of the legal profession to vigilantly guard the civil rights of individuals and to pay particular attention to ensuring the rights of individuals who may lack power or come from underrepresented groups. The LGBTQ Rights Section is particularly good at this, and our members have taken up the cause of vulnerable members of the LGBTQ population including at-risk youths and members of the inmate population. As members of a democracy, we cannot take our civil liberties for granted. They are constantly at risk of being abridged and are only as broad as those afforded to our least protected members of society.

What experience do you plan to tap into to accomplish these goals?

I plan to tap into the vast experience of our members to support the important work of the LGBTQ Rights Section. Our membership has a wealth of experience in protecting and defending LGBTQ rights in numerous areas of the law, including marriage equality and family formation, adoption and reproductive rights, and civil rights with respect to gender identity and sexual orientation.

Many of our members are active in nationwide advocacy groups and are knowledgeable as to the status of laws throughout the nation that impact the rights of the LGBTQ community. It is my plan to support the members of our section who, with seemingly boundless energy and generosity of spirit, continue their work of educating members of the legal profession, and our communities in general, on the importance of cultural competency and the fair and inclusive treatment of all individuals.

Why is the LGBTQ Rights Section's mission important for the legal industry?

The rights of LGBTQ individuals are deeply important to the legal community as our justice system is founded upon the notion that all people are treated equally under the law. LGBTQ individuals must be afforded the same civil rights as non-LGBTQ individuals to ensure liberty and justice for all.

What are you hoping is accomplished by the end of your term?

My term as chair is a one-year term. I hope that by the end of that year I will have spread the word on the importance of cultural competency and the use of inclusive terminology in our everyday lives and workplaces that is welcoming to all individuals regardless of their gender or sexual orientation. I hope that during that year the LGBTQ Rights Section will continue to monitor new legislation and seek to ensure that any new legislation protects the rights of all individuals equally, including members of the LGBTQ community, and that the section continues its important work of protecting, defending and advocating for the rights of the LGBTQ community.

--Editing by Janice Carter Brown.

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