

# UpFront



## Janet Welch Named Executive Director of the State Bar of Michigan

State Bar of Michigan General Counsel and Interim Executive Director Janet K. Welch

was named executive director of the State Bar of Michigan following a decision by the Board of Commissioners. According to State Bar President Kimberly M. Cahill, the appointment culminates a five-month nationwide search to fill the position vacated by John T. Berry when he accepted a post with the Florida Bar. In her role as executive director, Welch will oversee the day-to-day operations of the State Bar, implement policies set by the Board of Commissioners and the Representative Assembly, and direct the efforts of State Bar staff.

Welch, who joined the Bar in December 2000 as general counsel, is the first woman to head the more than 38,000-member statewide organization. A Michigan native, she is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Albion College and the University of Michigan Law School. She is also a graduate of the

Kennedy School of Government State and Local Senior Executive Program at Harvard University and was a Fulbright Scholar in comparative literature at the University of Zagreb in the former Yugoslavia.

"The Executive Director Search Committee and the Board of Commissioners had the difficult task of selecting the best candidate for this position from many qualified applicants," Cahill said. "We are grateful to everyone who applied for the position, and we're confident that Janet's experience and familiarity with the Michigan legal system will serve our organization well."

Before coming to the State Bar of Michigan in 2000, Welch served as Michigan Supreme Court Counsel for four years. She has had an extensive career in state government that started as a legislative analyst for the Michigan House of Representatives. In 1980, she was chosen to create a non-partisan legislative analysis office for the Michigan Senate, and served as its director for five years before attending law school.

After a clerkship with Michigan Supreme Court Justice Robert P. Griffin, Welch accepted a position as executive analyst in the Office of the Chief Justice of the Michigan Supreme Court, where her work included analysis of legislative issues affecting the judicial system. In that capacity, she served as reporter for the Commission on the Courts in the 21st Century, and as staff to the Michigan Justice Project. In 1998, the Council of State Governments named her a Toll Fellow for outstanding achievement and service to state government.

"I'm excited to accept the challenges of the executive director position," Welch said. "Michigan lawyers and the State Bar have a proud history of outstanding achievements, and I look forward to working to live up to the high standards of that history."

Editor's note: Watch for the June 2007 issue of the *Michigan Bar Journal* for an in-depth interview with State Bar Executive Director Janet Welch.

### Correction

Charles R. Rutherford was inadvertently omitted from the list of 2007 50-year honorees, which was published in the March 2007 issue.



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